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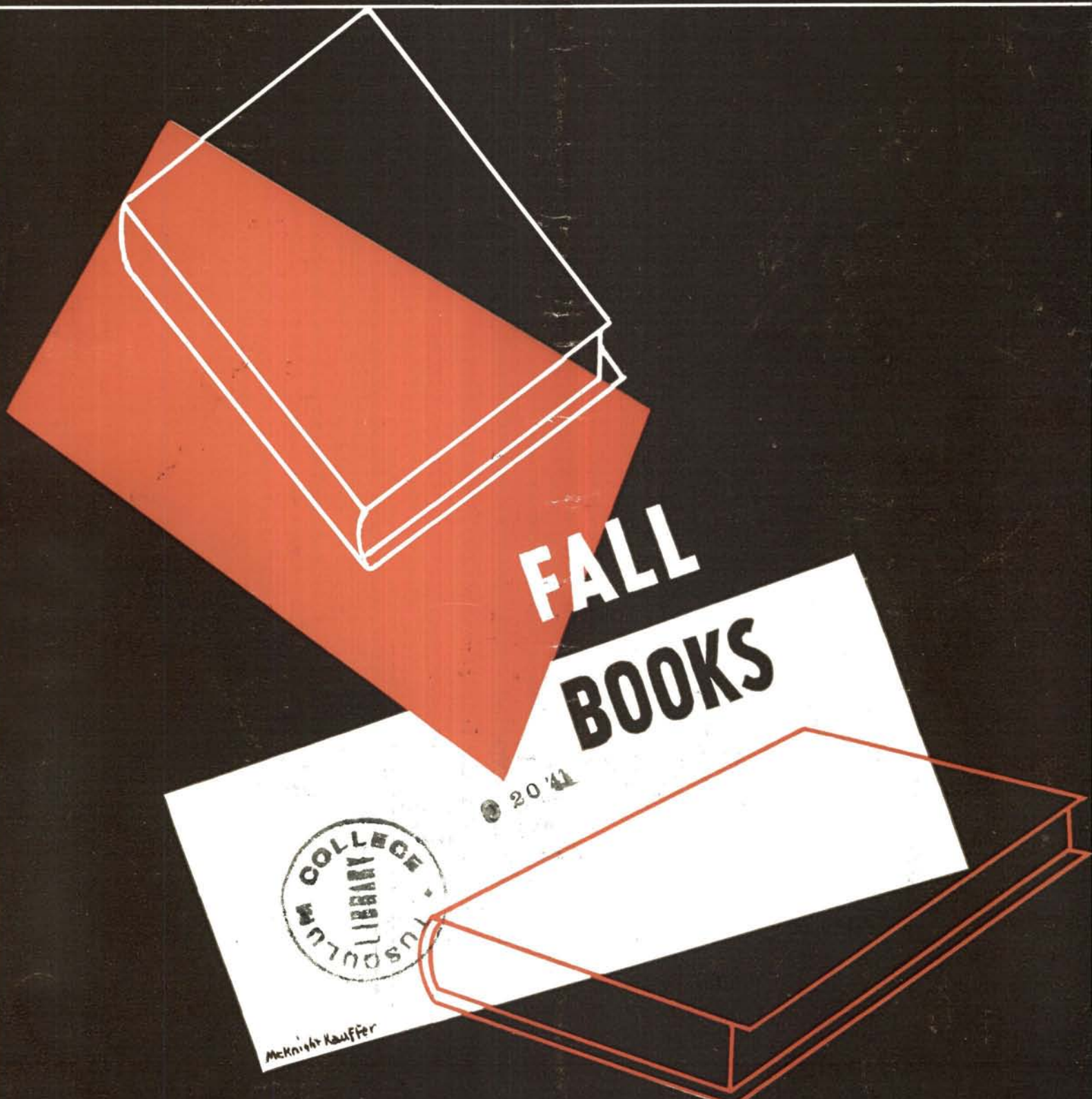

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—From the mural in the University Center Station, Cleveland

The Saturday Review of Literature

The Immunity Complex in America

NORMAN COUSINS

AMERICA has oriented much of her thinking on the assumption that the existence of her democracy, like the rising and setting of the sun, is a natural phenomenon beyond the reach of catastrophe. Whether we are aware of it or not, the feeling that "we'll blunder through somehow," that "nothing can happen to us," has exerted a tremendous pull on our collective attitudes.

This sense of national imperviousness is related to the sure-fire-solution psychology which has almost become part of the national pattern of thought. It is reflected or fostered in our history, our literature—even in our entertainment. Saturday afternoon—favorite moving picture time for the nation's children—is a good time to observe one aspect, at least, of this sure-fire-solution formula at work. A serial "thriller" will be shown, at the end of which the hero is left dangling from a cliff, struggling to keep his hold on a small, perilous wedge. Then comes a close-up of the fingers slowly losing their grip. The fingers straighten out and suddenly, but inevitably, the hand disappears. Equally inevitably comes the weekly catch-line—"next episode to be shown next week."

A thrilling climax—certainly; and a more precarious situation in real life could not be imagined. And yet—suspense-provoking as the ending of the episode may have been, and though the audience had seen what it wanted to see—not for a moment did anyone doubt that a sure-fire-solution would somehow be found; the only doubt was the manner in which the hero would be saved. And so, when the serial resumes the following week, the hero is shown safely nestled in the kindly branches of a tall tree, scratched up somewhat, to be sure, but safe nevertheless.

Nor is it an accident that the favorite character of comic strips, a uniquely American institution claiming the enthusiastic following of the overwhelmingly large majority of our population, both young and old, should be a good-natured but blundering hero, always in hot water with his wife or his boss or both—someone who misses trains, is behind in his rent, leaves the wrong note for the milkman, and is generally on the scene of a fire or a crime, where he is promptly apprehended as the guilty party. True, in most of these respects our hero is nothing but a mirror for the troubles in which the real and average Mr. Smith may find himself. Unlike Mr. Smith, however, our comic-strip hero, in one way or another, always blunders through. For him, the ultimate solution is as automatic as the printing presses on which he comes to life. Of course, styles in comic strips are changing, and our good-natured, blundering hero has had to share the spotlight with magnificently proportioned and generously exposed handsome young giants who fly through the air with the greatest of ease, human atom smashers who know everything that is happening everywhere, and what is more important, get there in time.

SEEN side by side, Superman and Andy Gump appear the soul of contrast. But only physically. Psychologically Andy Gump and Superman belong to the same family. Superman may travel on an interplanetary rocket, and Andy Gump in a second-hand, unimaginative, earth-ridden automobile; but they both live by, on, and for predicaments. Andy Gump gets caught in a closet, Superman in a steel vault of incredible thickness. Gump somehow effects an escape, more awkward than ingenious. Superman brings a magic gun into action and a large part of the steel wall vanishes. The important thing is that each escapes. Superman, though far from the type of person who habitually blunders through—he is as omniscient as he is omnipotent—is even more addicted to happy endings than his more earthly colleague. Thus recently, all the evils besetting the world were neatly and comprehensively solved when Superman took to the air, descended over the capitals of Berlin, Rome, and Moscow, and plucked the frantic but feeble dictators by the scruffs of their necks from their cozy homes. All three were carried off as easily as a falcon might carry baby pigeons. And when Der Fuehrer, Il Duce, and the First Comrade were finally deposited in one place, their heads were very solidly bumped together, in the manner of an old-fashioned schoolmaster disciplining three class bullies at the same time. A thorough solution and a happy ending indeed, and the only regret is that it had to take place in the comic strips.

These are no idle or random examples, far-fetched though they may seem. Of the dozen largest mass magazines in this country devoted in part or whole to fiction, only one or two do not seem reluctant to publish stories which do not end on a note of sweetness and light. The list of authors who have had to change their narratives in order to provide a happy curtain before their stories would be published in many of the large mass magazines would read like a "Who's Who" of American novelists. Nor is it unusual for a magazine to serialize a book and

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introduce or eliminate characters in order to avoid an atmosphere of what the editors feel to be excessive gloom or sadness. A sympathetic character who dies at the end of an early chapter in the book may be very much alive in the final installment of the serialization, perhaps as best man at the wedding—to the bewilderment of those readers who happen to have read both the serialization and the book.

It is doubtful whether the magazine editors are entirely to blame; many of their magazines have been built on the sure-fire-solution formula. And a successful formula indeed it has proved to be; it has been the means of reaching and maintaining magazine circulations in the millions.

PERHAPS the most obvious adherence to the formula is to be found in Hollywood. In recent years, there have been a number of exceptions—many of them, significantly enough, among the finest films of those years—but these are only a scant handful compared to the overwhelmingly large number which consistently yield to the inevitability of a happy solution—a solution which generally comes about by accident rather than by plan. Here, too, films adapted from books with too much of the doleful about them—especially when that sorrowfulness prevails at the end—are often refashioned in obedience to the formula. And even in the cases of moving pictures done from scripts, producers have been known to rush through new and happier endings if, after the first few showings, the public does not take kindly to the existing versions.

One version of the film "Meet John Doe," in advance showings throughout the country, pictures the hero on the roof of a skyscraper contemplating suicide after his "John Doe Clubs," a movement based on better understanding among men, are smashed by a selfish but powerful group of men who have discovered that they could not dominate it. In this version, he is just about to go over the ledge when the heroine reaches him and persuades him against the action, but the future status of the movement itself is negative, and logically so, as the picture ends. But when the picture opened on Broadway, a happier ending was substituted which left no doubt concerning the future of what had apparently been a defunct movement. Suddenly there appeared in the roof scene, coincident with the dramatic last-minute appearance of the heroine, members from the rank-and-file of the movement buoying up the hero with reports of reorganization. It was anti-climactic in the extreme and upset the natural flow of logic, but it made for a happier and characteristically Hollywoodian ending.

Serious fiction and the legitimate theatre, both of which deal with smaller and more specialized audiences than the mass magazines or the films, have been correspondingly more independent of the formula. It is estimated that one person out of a hundred is sufficiently interested in books to buy at least one a year; while the figures for attendance at legitimate theatres are in about the same ratio. With such a select audience, there is not the Hollywood slavishness to mass appeals. And yet even books and the stage have at times kept pace with the magazines and the movies in catering to the sure-fire-solution psychology. The twenties, particularly, were an era not only of quick-and-easy money schemes, but, in fiction, of quick-and-easy plots and quick-and-easy solutions. But when the depression set in during the thirties, carrying with it or coinciding with a reaction against the sunshine literature, fiction swung just as far in the other direction and became pretty much the literature of pessimism. The stage, too, experienced this swing of the pendulum.

BUT Hollywood and the giant-circulation magazines, while taking due note of the change in the national climate that became manifest in the thirties, varied the old formula only slightly. The themes became somewhat more realistic, acknowledging the presence of such unpleasantries as the depression and unemployment, but these realities served only to heighten the synthetic quality of the inevitable happy endings, to which Hollywood, especially, continued to cling with rigid determination. This may not have been good theatre, in the sense that it was true life, but it was certainly good business: the public was interested in predicaments, but only as they related to

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Journey Through Yugoslavia

BLACK LAMB AND GREY FALCON. A Journey Through Yugoslavia. By Rebecca West. New York: The Viking Press. 1941. *Two vols.* 1181 *pp.* $7.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS ADAMIC

ON October 9, 1934, recovering from a major operation, Rebecca West heard a news-broadcast about the assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia. It upset her terribly. Later, while still ill and weak, she had herself wheeled to a private projection-room to see the news-reel of the incident. Horrified and fascinated, she had it run off several times.

I saw the amazing film a few times too. I had returned from Yugoslavia a year and a half before and knew something of King Alexander's regime; I had talked with him and with his friends and enemies; I had expected him to be assassinated sooner or later; and to me, as he stepped on the quay at Marseilles, he looked in his admiral's uniform a rather uninspiring figure—about to be elevated to the status of tragedy because the act about to transpire involved more than his life. He was obviously scared to the point of near-numbness, as any man in his plight would be. The history of his dynasty and his own career were punctuated by assassinations; king-killing is a traditional political method in the Balkans; and he knew—as did the French secret police, as did Hitler and Mussolini and certain elements in Hungary—that there were men in Marseilles aided by enemies of Yugoslavia eager for reasons of their own to sacrifice themselves in order to kill him. Alexander knew that this time they might get him.

To Miss West, however, who till then knew next to nothing about Yugoslavia and her politics, the King looked "like a great man, which is not to say a good man or a wise man, but it is to say that he has that historic quality which comes from intense concentration on an important subject." She was certain that during those last few minutes as he was driven still alive through the streets of Marseilles he was thinking of Yugoslavia. How, precisely, she perceived this, she does not explain to one who is not her kind of mystic. But her profound reaction to the man and to his awful death is extremely interesting. For the next half-dozen years Yugoslavia absorbed all her energies and faculties. She began to study languages she had not even heard spoken before. She read about the country. Then she visited it and as a result underwent a rigid self-examination as a person and a "typical Englishwoman." Her whole experience was intensely personal.

"Nothing in my life," she writes, "had affected me more deeply than this journey through Yugoslavia. This was in part because there is a coincidence between the natural forms and colors of the western and southern parts of Yugoslavia and the innate forms and colors of my imagination. Macedonia is the country I have always seen between sleeping and waking; from childhood, when I was weary of the place where I was, I wished it would turn into a town like Yaitse or Mostar, Bitolj or Achrid. But my journey moved me also because it was like picking up a strand of wool that would lead me out of a labyrinth in which, to my surprise, I had found myself immured. It might be that when I followed the thread to its end I would find myself faced by locked gates, and that this labyrinth was my sole portion on this earth. But at least I now knew its twists and turns, and what corridor led into what vaulted chamber, and nothing in my life before I went to Yugoslavia had even made plain these mysteries. These experiences made me say to myself, 'If a Roman woman had, some years before the sack of Rome, realized why it was going to be sacked and what motives the barbarians and what the Romans, and had written down all she knew and felt about it, the record would have been of value to historians. My situation, though probably not so fatal, is as interesting.' Without doubt it was my duty to keep a record of it."

Here is the record of that experience in two huge volumes containing more than a half-million words, two maps, and many excellent photographs; over six pounds of grand reading—*if* you like good writing, know little or nothing about Yugoslavia, and don't care greatly if some of Miss West's statements are true or not. The publishers describe the work as "an adventure through time and space," which "subconsciously but inevitably is also the portrait of its author . . . one of England's most brilliant and entertaining personalities." Many reviewers will praise it to the skies, compare it favorably to "Arabia Deserta" and "A Philosopher's Travel Diary"; and parts of it doubtless are worthy of the closest and widest attention, but my feelings about the book as a whole are mixed to the point of discomfort. My trouble is that I am a native of a place within the country Miss West writes about, and that just now I am deeply worried about the future of its people, and therefore sensitive to inaccurate statements by a writer of standing.

—Drawing by Wyndham Lewis

Rebecca West

Miss West's personal reactions to people, places, and things are always interesting, even if sometimes superficial and often marred by careless errors. But I can't help wondering about her when early in the book she says that the people of Zagreb "have been living there in physical, though not political comfort for a thousand years," for at least half of its inhabitants have always lived in inadequate or miserable circumstances. Then, a few pages later, she reaches deep into the country and comes up with this sentence: "In Yugoslavia there was an intensity of feeling that was not only of immense and exhilarating force, but had an honorable origin, proceeding from realist passion, from whole belief," and I am ready to cheer.

The book includes some fine objective reporting. There are long stretches of fairly accurate historical narrative, at times going back to B.C. There is repeated emphasis of the South Slavs'—especially the Serbs'—vitality, heroism, and devotion to life, which has no connection with the fear of death. But there is no mention of several important regions and many significant contemporary situations, facts, trends, and personalities—a lack one cannot avoid noting in a work of Miss West's bulk and pretensions, especially since she gives endless space to relatively inconsequential things.

She is apparently aware of the peasants who constitute seventy per-

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Death by Misadventure

CENTENNIAL OF THE DETECTIVE STORY

GEORGE STEVENS

SINCE literary celebrations occur, for convenience, with reference to the decimal system, it is not surprising that the hundredth anniversary of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" should be accompanied by publications, publicity programs, and other demonstrations in honor of the detective story. The remarkable thing is that the centenary year has only intensified what has been going on all the time. Surely no other category of writing has given rise to so substantial a body of pseudo-scholarly research as crime fiction. No invidious implication is intended in calling this research pseudo-scholarly. Mr. Somerset Maugham is indirectly quoted by the author of "Murder for Pleasure"* as predicting "the day when the police novel will be studied in the colleges, when aspirants for doctoral degrees will shuttle the oceans and haunt the world's great libraries to conduct personal research expeditions into the lives and sources of the masters of the art." Obviously Mr. Maugham is predicting a day which has already dawned. Moreover, he is pointing out a tendency which there is every reason to regard with complacency, if not active encouragement. Students of the works of A. Conan Doyle make better pretence to intellectual eminence and scholarship sublime than, say, the numerous doctors of philosophy who have arrived at their academic distinction by timing the daily activities of two hundred housewives with a stopwatch.

But detective-story criticism, at its best, is no mere plodding Ph. D. work. It is at its best when it is most conscious of its pseudo-scholarship. The researches of the Baker Street Irregulars are not all on the same level. For instance, Rex Stout's paper in a recent issue of this magazine relied too strongly on a method analogous to that of the Baconians. More conviction has been carried by earlier studies, also familiar to *Saturday Review* readers, from the desks of Elmer Davis and Christopher Morley. But however the individual contributions may vary, the Baker Street Irregulars have provided what is undoubtedly the most acute caricature of literary scholarship to have appeared in their generation. One suspects that the caricature was not originally contemplated, but grew naturally out of the central innocent assumption that Sherlock Holmes stories were non-fiction. Once the assumption is made, it leads inevitably to a body of doctrine which bears the same relation to a Ph. D. thesis as rubber-sheet geometry does to Euclid. (Indeed, the weakness of Mr. Stout's position was in coming so perilously close to proving that Watson *didn't* exist.)

Serious or frivolous, plodding or inspired, Euclidean or four-dimensional, the corpus of detective-story criticism has grown to sizable proportions. Surprising proportions, considering that the detective story is generally looked upon as a form of escape literature. No such profusion of magazine articles has celebrated the adventure novel, the 'Western," the light romance. You may say that adventure novels and Westerns are essentially pulps; but, as Mr. Haycraft demonstrates in "Murder for Pleasure," many of the best detective novelists are pulp graduates. The fact is that the mystery shelf in the rental library is the only one taken seriously by literary critics (except for the much smaller shelf of ghost stories and pseudo-scientific adventures à la "Time Machine," which are taken seriously by a much smaller but no less passionate group of connoisseurs). The fact is curious, but not inexplicable.

When we speak of escape literature as comprising the rental library shelves of mystery, adventure, and romance, we are speaking loosely. Actually, of the three categories, detective fiction is the only one which can properly be called escape literature. Detective novels are the only novels which, from the reader's point of view, bear no relation whatever to life—or at most the same relation as exists between two (Euclidean) parallel lines, which look very much alike but have no point of contact. Adventure stories are read, mostly by men, and romances, mostly by women, for the same reason: they provide vicarious experiences in the real world. Detective stories provide real experiences in the world of imagination. They are enjoyed not as substitutes for anything else: they are enjoyed for themselves. That is why Mr. Haycraft and other connoisseurs object to the bastard form of detective story which depends in whole or in too great part upon adventure. The two elements do not dissolve, they only emulsify.

Howard Haycraft

IT is not to be expected that the theory just set forth will pass unchallenged. First of all, it involves a possible confusion in the matter of definition, which had better be cleared up right away. There may be those who object that I have given the "escape" label to the wrong category: that escape implies vicarious experience, and should therefore be applied to adventure and romance. The label is unimportant provided that the distinction between detective fiction, on the one hand, and romance and adventure, on the other, is recognized. Second, the proposition that detective stories bear no relation to life may be misinterpreted. They must, as I implied, resemble life. This is one of the rules. They cannot go off into the supernatural (that is the territory of the ghost story and the pseudo-scientific adventure); all characterization and motivation must be in human terms; and all technicalities, legal and scientific, must be exact. Detective stories may admittedly be, and frequently are, based on actual murders. Still, from the reader's point of view, the detective story exists in its own world, in which the emotional values are quite different from those of the real world. The reader must not be distracted by a feeling of horror at the murder—as he naturally would be by a murder among his acquaintances—or undue

* *MURDER FOR PLEASURE: The Life and Times of the Detective Story. By Howard Haycraft. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co. 1941. 409 pp., with index. $3.*

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personal concern with the fate of the convicted murderer. These are among the most elementary rules of the game; and it is unnecessary to elaborate the point further, because it is established by the existence of rules of the game.

What these rules are Mr. Haycraft explains in a chapter of "Murder for Pleasure," a book remarkable for completeness, accuracy, and infallible soundness of judgment. "Murder for Pleasure" is a history of detective fiction including all salient information about the major practitioners of the craft, as well as many of the lesser lights. The information is critical, bibliographical, and, when possible, personal. It traces the schools and influences which have governed detective-story writing in England, on the continent of Europe, and in the United States during the last hundred years. Mr. Haycraft explains, moreover, the nature of the mystery market and how much a successful writer of detective fiction can expect to make. He examines the critical literature of detective fiction. He pursues an interesting thesis to the effect that detective novels can flourish only in democracies, where official methods are open to criticism —this chapter is an elaboration of an article which originally appeared in these pages. He speculates on the future of the detective story. He includes a comprehensive detective-story quiz, a bibliographical list of first appearances in print, a Who's Who, and a couple of appendices, not to mention copious illustrations.

Possibly in the subtitle—"The Life and Times of the Detective Story"—Mr. Haycraft has promised more than he has fulfilled. There is so much in his book about the Life that there is little space to pay attention to the Times. It would be interesting to trace fashions in literary detection in connection with contemporary fashions in other popular reading; and to compare publishing landmarks in and out of the mystery field. There is so much attention given to the subject in hand that little emphasis is placed on its background.

This, however, is the only criticism of any consequence that can be made of Mr. Haycraft's book. One reads it with that comfortable recognition of a kindred spirit, that confidence in the author's judgment, which convey unique pleasure. He is so right about the authors one has read that one feels certain he is right about the authors one has not read. He has perhaps given Conan Doyle slightly less attention than his importance would justify, but Doyle has already had everything said about him. One may

(*Continued on page* 34)

The "Loyalists" in America

SECRET HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. By Carl Van Doren. New York: The Viking Press. 1941. 534 *pp., with index.* $3.75.

Reviewed by FRANK MONAGHAN

A DISTINGUISHED historical writer, an important and intriguing subject, free access to the largest and richest unexploited manuscript collection on the American Revolution: the result is a brilliant and basic contribution to the great books on the American struggle for independence. No study of the period has cast such a clear and new light upon the hidden activities, the secret manoeuvres, and the treasonable dickerings of many American worthies during that war. There is fresh information upon men whom we long ago knew to be traitors to the patriot cause. There is new and sometimes startling data (and of a kind that carries conviction) on some men who lived and died with the reputation of good patriots. Not all of these latter were actively engaged in treason, for some of them, although more than willing, never found the proper opportunity to exercise their talents. Mr. Van Doren gives us the documented story of the fifth column of the American Revolution.

These are the documents that usually elude the historian. Their absence is always one of the great gaps in our knowledge of the past. Dangerous and treasonable documents seldom escape destruction; indeed far more innocent documents are often destroyed to prevent even minor misunderstandings and embarrassments. John Jay, who had an archivist's concern for the preservation of his personal papers and whose patriotism was impeccable, carefully destroyed a number of his letters. Some less worthy patriots must have had small bonfires—especially after the discovery of Arnold's treason. But one can never be certain that your correspondents will destroy other relevant documents.

The bulk of the new materials presented in the "Secret History" are from the vast mass of Clinton manuscripts now in the William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan. Sir Henry Clinton commanded the British forces in America from 1778 to 1782 and the many thousands of manuscripts in his collection give a remarkably full picture of the operations of the British Secret Service during those critical years. These materials are used for the first time by Mr. Van Doren—and with devastating effect. Here are the letters of conspirators, the British replies, secret codes, detailed reports on potential traitors —and a variety of clues that have enabled the author to penetrate the meaning of many letters in other collections of manuscripts.

Benedict Arnold is, of course, the dominant character—and for the inception and the progress of his treason we now have an almost complete documentation. Some details are still missing, but they could hardly add anything of value to the present text. The apologists for Arnold should now be totally silent—unless they merely wish to admit their error. Mr. Van Doren is eminently fair in his treatment of Arnold, but the documents themselves are too eloquent of his deliberate and diabolical treachery. Even those who have tried to shield his charming wife by explaining that she knew nothing or understood little of the treason should be completely confounded. She may not have originated the plan, but she was certainly aware of the details.

ARNOLD'S treason is the main theme, but there are scores of lesser betrayals in evidence. The British regarded these machinations as a necessary means of winning the war: their corruption of patriots was as important as their military might. It is surprising to discover how many patriots were thus weaned from the American cause. It is true that many did not succumb to the temptation, but it is somewhat astonishing to note how long and curiously they dallied with treason. Mr. Van Doren's net does not catch all the smaller fry. Sir James Jay deserves a place in his basket of smelly fish. Undoubtedly others will turn up with the publication of the William Smith diary now in the New York Public Library. Nor does he mention the corruption of some patriots by the French—well, perhaps corruption is not the right word. But the French found it necessary to subsidize some patriots to make certain that they would remain active in the prosecution of the war.

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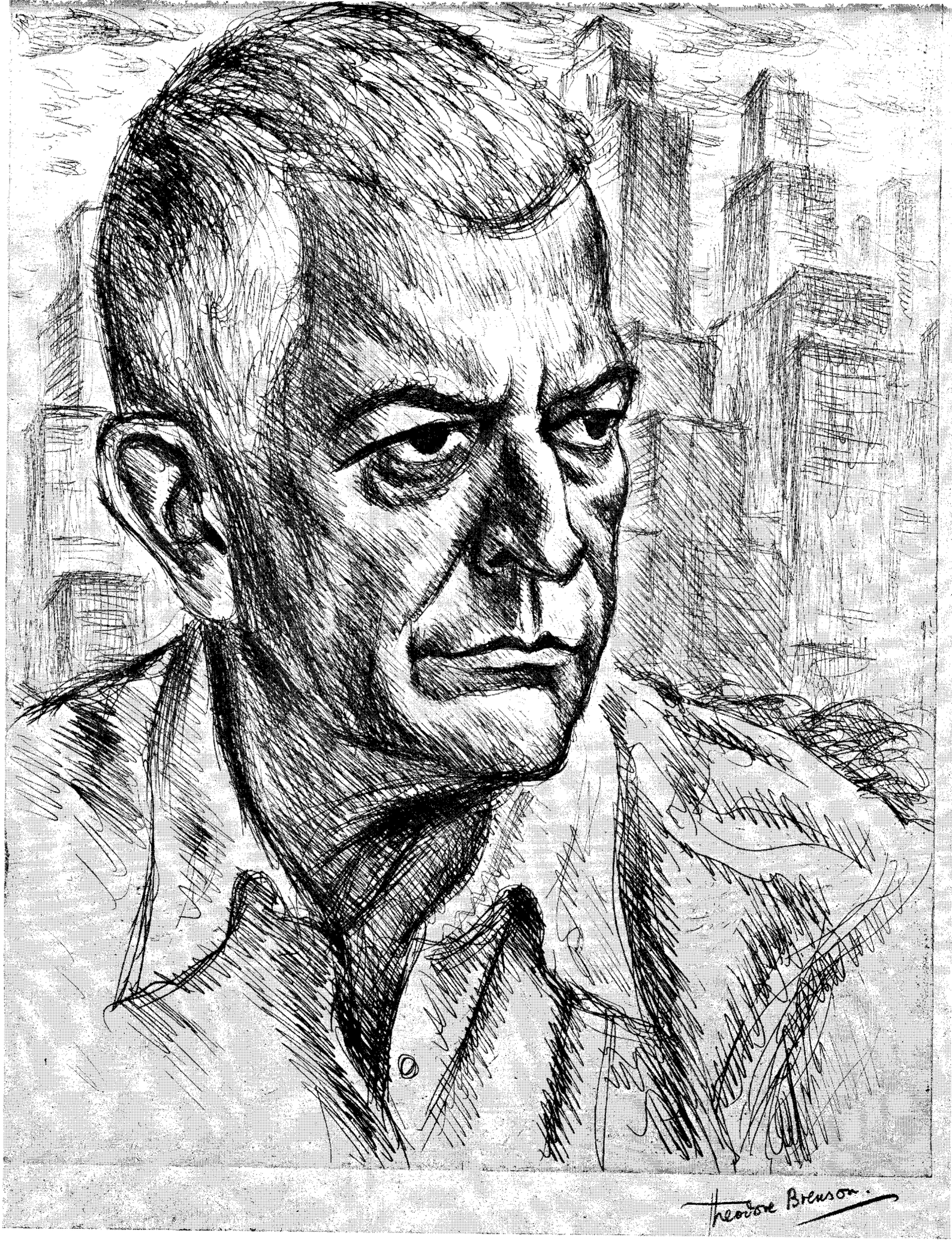

Carl Van Doren

Two Saturday Review Etchings

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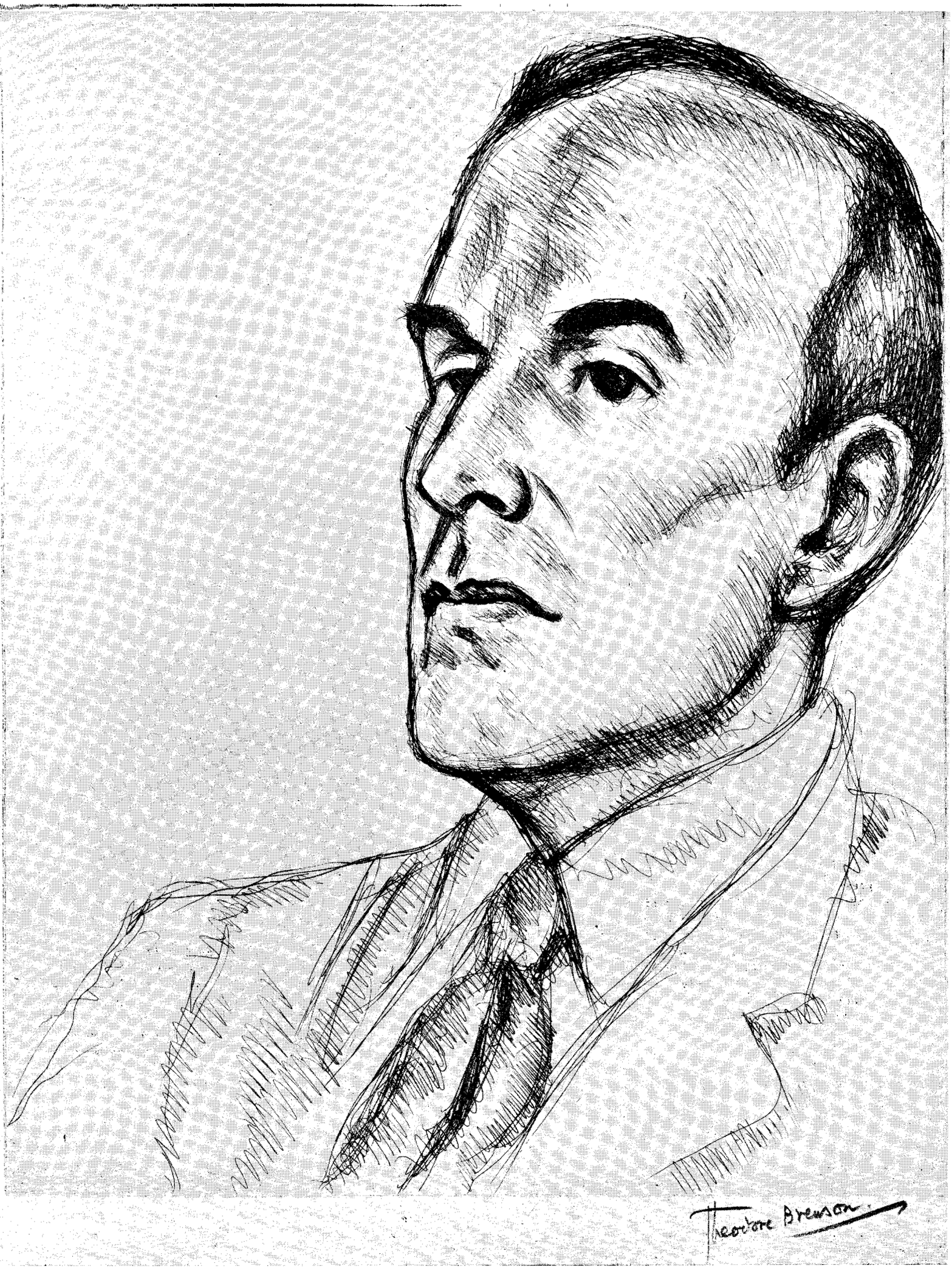

Archibald MacLeish

from Life by Theodore Brenson

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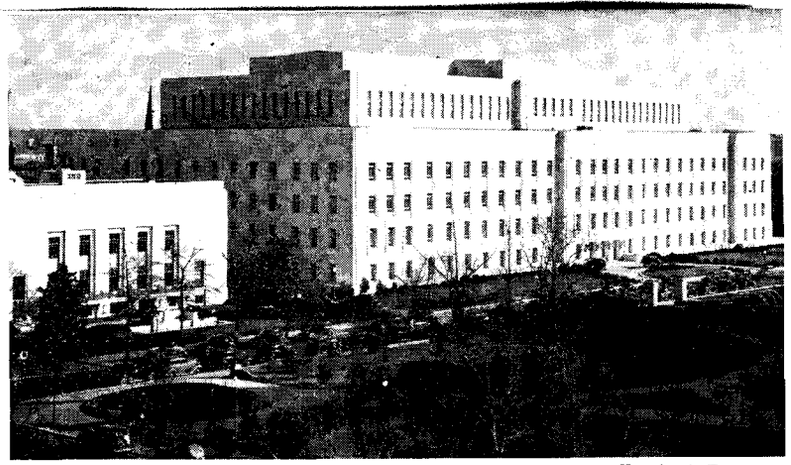
Archibald MacLeish's Two Years As Librarian

HARRY C. SHRIVER and CEDRIC LARSON



Harris & Ewing

The $10,000,000 Annex of the Library of Congress

OCTOBER 1, 1941, marked the second anniversary of the Library of Congress under the administration of Archibald MacLeish. During those two years, the Library has undergone a nearly incredible metamorphosis. On the surface, this metamorphosis may seem to have taken the form of the new ten-million-dollar annex of snow-white marble—the largest and most modern library building in the world. Fundamentally, however, the change goes beyond that to the actual operation and direction of the library itself.

Mr. MacLeish believes in the spiritual worth of a library as an institution. Writing in *The Atlantic* last May, he said:

> A library is not merely a collection of books. It is also a means by which books may be used. Its books must be available, and available in the most effective terms. Availability means efficient cataloguing, efficient servicing, and adequate space for reading and reference.

Mr. MacLeish also believes in the immediacy of the library to the world of today, regarding it as a vital organ of democracy. Accordingly, he has pressed into service the unrivalled resources of the Library of Congress in every possible way as part of the country's defense program—service to Congress in making available information and data on literally thousands of subjects on vital issues and legislation facing that body, service to the manifold national defense agencies which have mushroomed in Washington during the past year, and finally, service to the readers and researchists who throng the halls and reading rooms of the main building and annex daily.

Civilization follows the libraries—this is the MacLeish credo. Our democratic way of life is admittedly complex, and no easy task to direct and regulate; and our national administrators and leaders are turning with increasing frequency to the library for intelligent guidance and factual data.

After becoming acquainted with his "family" of 1250 employees in the Library, Mr. MacLeish set about the task of administrative re-organization. Various surveys of all phases of the library's administrative and technical work were made by several fact-finding groups, whose findings and recommendations furnished the basis for this reorganization. A number of general orders were issued by the librarian during June and July, 1940, which created three major departments in the library: Administrative, Processing, and Reference.

The Administrative Department was established to fuse under a single director those offices whose functions are primary to the services of the Library of Congress as a library—sometimes called "housekeeping services." The Administrative Assistant to the Librarian, Mr. Verner W. Clapp, is director of this Department, which includes the following offices: Accounts Office, Disbursing Office, Mail and Delivery Service, Office of the Secretary, Office of the Superintendent of Library Buildings and Grounds, Personnel Office, Publications Office, and Supply Office.

THE second major Department, the Processing Department, is comprised of those technical divisions concerned with the operations by which books are prepared for the shelves. It was activated September 1, 1940, and the services of its present director, Mr. L. Quincy Mumford, were made available for a year through the coöperation of Mr. H. M. Lydenberg, Director of the New York Public Library. This Department includes about 400 staff members and consists of the following divisions; Accessions, Descriptive Cataloging, Subject Cataloging, Catalog Preparation and Maintenance, and the Card Division. The Department is designed to coördinate all the work of acquisition and cataloging of books, and finally the distribution of printed cards to libraries throughout the nation and the world.

Mr. MacLeish is trying out a plan for obtaining copyright books in advance of publication so that cards will be available for distribution more quickly to libraries buying these volumes. To this end, he has twice circularized publishers, and now about 12 per cent of copyright books—representing the more important titles—are prepublication copyright deposits. The making of a library card is a highly technical job, but the length of time required is being whittled down from six to three weeks in most cases.

Director of the Reference Department is Dr. Luther H. Evans, who joined the Library of Congress staff as Director of the Legislative Reference Service on December 1, 1939, and was made Chief Assistant Librarian eleven months later. Dr. Evans was organizer and director of the Historical Records Survey prior to joining the Library of Congress, and brought a wealth of administrative and organizing experience to his post.

Included in the Reference Department are the many reading rooms of the Library, Union Catalog, Rare Book Collection, Hispanic Foundation, Photoduplication Service, Books for the Adult Blind, Legislative Reference Service, Library Fellowships, and the following divisions: Fine Arts, Periodicals, Documents, Smithsonian, Aeronautics, Manuscripts, Maps, Music, Slavic, and Semitic Division.

The Copyright Office and Law Library are not under the jurisdiction of any of the three new major Departments in the Library, as their work is held to be too highly specialized. Under the new streamlined set-up, five men report directly to the Librarian, instead of the 50-odd under the old scheme when he first assumed his duties as Librarian.

"The Library is, and should be, a great pool of scholarship," declared Mr. MacLeish before a Congressional hearing in 1940. In keeping with this was his announcement in July, 1940 of the establishment of five fellowships which the Library of Congress would award annually to young scholars who have completed their graduate work and begun specialization in their several fields, and who were competent to criticize the library's holdings. This system has proven very successful during the past year.

Associate Fellows of the Library of

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Congress were also named in October, 1940, from members of the staff of the library. These fellowships were honorary in character, but designed to recognize the special qualifications and achievements of various members of the staff in such fields as history, medicine, radio, sociology, and the like. There are ten of these associate fellows, whose appointments are also for one year.

Mr. MacLeish has found an exceptionally high morale on the part of all the employees in the Library of Congress during all phases of reorganization. He has launched a "promotions-from-within" policy so that a man or woman can make a career in the Library of Congress, and he is experimenting with certain features of an "in-service" training program in which "embryo" librarians will serve "internships" of varying length.

IN the winter of 1940, Mr. MacLeish won his first notable victory as Librarian when he secured a record-breaking appropriation from Congress, after appearing before the House Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations. He was given an increase of more than $400,000 in the 1940-41 appropriation over the one granted the Library the previous year, the sums being $3,560,298 and $3,107,707 respectively. The 1940-41 budget authorized more than fifty new employees for the staff, who were sorely needed. With the emergency defense program entailing a substantial increase in the Library's load of routine work, the 1941-42 budgetary request was for over $4,000,000.

In his capacity of Librarian of Congress, Mr. MacLeish has sought to do far more than merely administer an institution, important as that function is. He has assumed by right of natural ability something of a role of leader in the culture of America. By writing, lecturing, and example, he has protested against indifference and apathy in our country toward the smothering of liberty at home and abroad. His little book, "The Irresponsibles," for instance, was something of a bombshell in the world of letters.

Because of his close friendship with the President, Mr. MacLeish's influence may be said to extend beyond the confines of the Library of Congress to the life of the nation at large. He can be considered an informal adviser to the President and one of the chief executive's trusted lieutenants.

Mr. MacLeish's vigorous leadership in the Nation's No. 1 library post for more than twenty-two months should furnish ample assurance of the vital role which the Library of Congress is destined to play in our cultural life in years to come.

Blueprint for Peace

TWO WAY PASSAGE. By Louis Adamic. New York: Harper & Bros. 1941. 327 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

THERE is no more useful American citizen than Louis Adamic, and none with higher ideals. He stands out as the one among us who more than any other has labored to interpret the foreign-born population in the United States to the older Anglo-Saxon group and vice versa. He has traveled every section of the country, the mining camps, the sordid little towns, and the pleasant, friendly villages, and the great cities where the immigrants are to be found in large or small numbers. This summer he has had a vision, an extraordinary vision, which does great credit to his heart—it is the idea that when this war is won by an American victory over the forces of Hitlerian evil the work of reconstructing Europe shall be entrusted to us Americans, chiefly those of foreign birth. Germany will be reconstituted by German-Americans and policed by an army of German-born Americans headed by our German-born general Walter Krueger—"just a 'God damn Hun' except that he is a swell American and one of the best general officers we have."

As quartermaster officers we are going to send over, according to Mr. Adamic, "General Joseph E. Barzynski, son of a Polish immigrant born in St. Paul, Nebraska; and Colonel Emil Antonovich, a native of San Francisco born of immigrants from a little town on the Eastern coast of the Adriatic in Dalmatia. We will send a whole batch of officers like that, thousands of them. . . . One of the brigades or divisions will be commanded by General Davis, a Negro American." Mr. Adamic is perfectly certain that we can help Europe develop an economic system that will work, which seems like childish faith in view of the fact that we have never been able to make ours work here. He says he doesn't care what anybody will call that system, but "the chances are it will be something to the left of what we have in America—a mixture of private property, controlled industry, public works, Socialism and Communism. We will encourage coöperatives . . . we will be for a great Continental labor movement."

Louis Adamic

The trouble with Europe, Mr. Adamic continues, is that she is a great giant being suffocated, constricted to death by being kept in the binding nationalistic garments of civilization's childhood. He thinks that all she needs "is to have those didies and safety pins removed and get used to moving and acting in a free adult manner." All of this leads to the fact that "We Americans, some of us, want to take care of Europe for a while until she gets down to returning to her business as a civilization." That is where the "two-way passage" comes into the picture. We foreign-born Americans are to do it and to set up a "European Nation of Nations with widespread, equalized welfare and opportunity, and the principles and practices of freedom and democracy, law and order. . . . We want a European revolution; a democratic revolution, *the American revolution* . . . extended to Europe and no maybe about it." We are not to be conquerors or invaders, or intruders, but just visitors, we are their nephews and second cousins.

Well, we shall have many other schemes more visionary and more impractical than this before the world comes to its senses, but we certainly will never have one that is more naive. In the first place Mr. Adamic has built up his whole theory as to what the outcome of the war will be on Mr. Bill Knudsen's saying "America can write her own ticket in 1943, and it can be twice anybody else's ticket." Well, he forgets that Bill Knudsen, good man as he is, has slipped in his judgment more than once since he took his present high job. But that we shall be producing by 1943 unbelievable quantities of war material is true. Hitler says that he will be doing the same in all Europe long before then. Still it is not material alone that wins a war, as Hitler is showing in Russia. There are other things that come into the picture, including a good army, well trained with great generals and strategists. Here is Louis Fisher, for instance, whose judgment as to what is happening and will happen in Europe

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is infinitely better than Bill Knudsen's, who knows nothing in that field, cabling from London to *The Nation:* "If Russian resistance collapses I do not see how England can win the war. I do not see how Germany can win it either . . . "

Granted, however, that Mr. Knudsen and Mr. Adamic are right, it seems to me that we Americans are the least fitted of all to go over to Europe which we do not understand and to take upon ourselves the terrific mission of ending the age-old quarrels, the interminable race antagonisms, the historic jealousies and straightening them all out over night—in the four years of President Willkie in Berlin. Again, Mr. Adamic fails to touch upon any such practical problems as to where the money is to come from, where the experts are to be found—apparently they must be found among our foreign-born. And how can visitors and second cousins impose their will upon all of Europe? If it is to take 400,000 men to do this in Germany, how many will it take in Spain, Rumania, Italy, the Balkans, Greece, Russia, Turkey, in all those States in which the totalitarian idea has taken a foothold?

Well, Mr. Adamic really believes that the plain people everywhere will rise up to embrace us and hang garlands around the necks of their second cousins of whose existence they are not aware. They will welcome the introduction, it appears, of American ideas of government and of that hybrid economic system which Mr. Adamic describes. Now I am the German-born son of a German immigrant, and, having been devoted to lost causes and all sorts of idealisms all my life, I want more than anything else in the world to have America the great arbitrator of post-war affairs in Europe, the great Samaritan binding up the wounds, rushing in unlimited food, and sanitary experts, doctors, builders, engineers, native-born and foreign-born, by the hundred thousand. That is precisely one reason why I think the United States should stay out of this war. My belief is that if we go in we shall be too impoverished and too full of hate and bitterness, and too full of grief over our lost sons to be impartial or just, any more than we were capable of being it in 1919 when Woodrow Wilson helped to write the treaty with Germany which the Senate properly rejected. But it is a grand thing to have Louis Adamic dreaming dreams and seeing visions. I hope he continues to do so, but that he will add to his competence as a dreamer a facing of facts other than those in the headlines, and a realistic understanding of what is really happening and likely to happen in the European cauldron.

"Zero-Point of Infamy"

SCUM OF THE EARTH. By Arthur Koestler. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1941. 287 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by LEO LANIA

In those days the European continent had already reached a stage where a man could be told without irony that he should be thankful to be shot and not strangled, decapitated, or beaten to death . . . In Liberal-Centigrade, Vernet was the zero-point of infamy; measured in Dachau-Fahrenheit it was still thirty-two degrees above zero. In Vernet beating-up was a daily occurrence; in Dachau it was prolongued until death ensued. In Vernet people were killed for lack of medical attention; in Dachau they were killed on purpose; in Vernet half the prisoners had to sleep without blankets in twenty degrees of frost; in Dachau they were put in irons and exposed to the frost.

IN these words Arthur Koestler, in his latest book, sums up his experiences in the camp of Vernet. There were—and there still are today—more than a dozen concentration camps in France for those "who a few years before had been called the martyrs of fascist barbarism—and who now had become the Scum of the Earth." I myself spent several months in four of these camps, among them the Roland Garros Stadium near Paris, just as Koestler did. Vernet was by far the worst of them. The other camps were reserved for German and Austrian emigrants whom even the French police could not reproach with anything except their former nationality and their unequivocal anti-fascist convictions. To Vernet were sent those unfortunate victims of denunciations who had been declared "politically suspect." A Hungarian by nationality and therefore a subject of a neutral nation, for many years a correspondent of the liberal *London News-Chronicle,* Arthur Koestler was caught between the claws of French bureaucracy at the start of the war, and after passing through the stations of the coal cellar of the Prefecture and the Stadium of Roland Garros (with both of which we Paris emigrants were only too familiar), he landed in the hell of Vernet. He is the one of the very few who were able to escape, and the first to bring news from there.

But touching and shocking as this part of his book may be, "Scum of the Earth" is far more than a report upon the French concentration camps, more than the tragic story of the refugees in France; and however masterly is Koestler's linking of the idiotic and hysterical persecution of these potential allies of the French democracy to the basic causes of the French disaster, and however valuable the book may be as a panorama of this catastrophe, its real importance lies elsewhere.

Arthur Koestler is not only a brilliant journalist; he is also an unusually gifted novelist, as he has proven in "Darkness at Noon," his novel about the Moscow trials, a book that elicited much deserved praise. The hand of a great artist is shown in the way in which he brings to life his fellow prisoners, and the French officials, soldiers, officers, peasants, and bourgeois in dozens of portraits and many little scenes.

As a psychologist he perceives what is in back of things and penetrates under the surface of events; and so this autobiographical report develops into a deeply moving analysis of our entire time. Koestler was a Communist. In the beginning of 1938, like many other honest idealists indignant about the Moscow trials, he turned his back on the party. In the present book he renders his spiritual and political credo.

Through all his adventures—and truly they are hair-raising; through the horrors of the prisons and camps and his flight before the German army—which flight he experienced in the ranks of a scattered section of the Foreign Legion; throughout all these adventures, this *leitmotif* of a search for truth runs like a red thread, and this theme insures to his book a permanent place in the ranks of the spiritual documents of our epoch.

—From the jacket

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"Loaded with Dynamite"

THAT DAY ALONE. By Pierre Van Paassen. New York: The Dial Press. 1941. 458 pp. $3.75.

Reviewed by MAURICE HINDUS

THIS is a vivid and exciting book. It is loaded with information, also with dynamite. No other book I have read on the troubles of our times crackles with so much explosiveness. For Van Paassen is more than a reporter or sociologist. A descendant of a long line of Dutch preachers, he not only sees the person or the event he depicts, but in the manner of a minister of the Gospel after reciting a passage of Scripture, he sermonizes on the meaning of either or both.

His concern is not theology or abstract dogma which he loathes, but humanity in its every day manifestations and he minces neither words nor sentiments. He bristles with challenge. His treatment of some subjects, notably the politics of the Roman Catholic Church in the Europe of today, will evoke sharp controversy, may even involve him in a battle. Yet the book will be widely read, for even when he covers ground already more or less familiar to the reader, Van Paassen has an approach all his own, vital with meaning and passion.

In terms of richness of experience and dramatic portrayal, few eyewitness accounts of the fall of France will equal the level of Van Paassen's "Farewell to France," which constitutes one-fifth of the book. Van Paassen pictures a France whose internal malady was as open as the waters in a river, and which flowed no less freely in the very talk of the people. He presents countless personages, diplomats, generals, priests, peasants, workers, shopkeepers, artists, writers, almost all of whom had mesmerized themselves into invincibility or were corroded with inner decay. Consider the case of Louis Ferdinand Céline, author of "Journey to the End of the Night." In Russia Stalin had praised the book and lifted it to a gigantic best seller. Yet forgetting all he had written in his revolutionary novel, Céline can only fulminate obscenely against the British and blame them for all the evils that have come to his native land. After reading Van Paassen's book one cannot escape the tragic conclusion that France is on the eve of another momentous and awesome revolution.

The most tender part of the book deals with the author's visit to his native town in Holland. "Twenty-eight hundred generations of my ancestors lie buried in that ground"—which is reason enough for solemn contemplation. Here are remembrance and nostalgia, joy and sorrow, and much more, for to Van Paassen, Gorcum is all Holland, the good and the evil, the piety and the profanity, the jollity which is thin, the dullness which is thick, especially in the Sabbath. But he loves Gorcum as he loves Holland, and chides it for its smugness, its lack of passion, its overconfidence, its guileless trust in Hitler's promises.

Then the Germans come. At first there is stupefaction, then anger, then uneasiness, then friendship, then "the new order." Sylvan de Wilt, a plumber, Jan Trouw a preacher and painter, Garritt Jan Stran, a schoolmaster, are the first victims. The Gestapo picks them as hostages. As they stand chanting, "The Lord is Great, His name is Great, the wonder of His work is Great, endlessly Great His Love—" the Gestapo chief shouts "fire," and they fall to the earth silent forever. . . . The narrative skill with which Van Paassen depicts the enthronement of the new order in Gorcum, makes this part of the book one of the most moving documents of our times.

The remaining sections are made up of essays, sketches, adventures, stories, portraits, all bearing on the main theme of the book, and all revealing directly and indirectly a fresh light or a fresh shadow on this earth of ours. Here are Wilson, Clemenceau, Matteoti, Mussolini. Here also, as Van Paassen portrays him, is one of the most sinister figures in Europe, not a German, but a Frenchman—General

Pierre van Paassen

Weygand. Van Paassen blames him above all others for the break with England, the armistice, and all that has since followed in France. From his haunt in Africa the general is watching the European scene and keeping himself ready—not to fight off the enemy of the dead republic but to drown in blood any compatriots who might attempt to bring it once more to life.

It is in this section that Van Paassen says much about religion, chiefly about Protestantism. "The task of Christianity conscious of its calling is to bring religion down from heaven to earth . . . the real adversary of Christ is the godlessness of pious formalism." He dramatizes the meaning of this in the unforgettable portraits of three dauntless Protestant pastors of whom the reader, like this reviewer, has perhaps never heard. They are Leonard Ragaz of Zurich, Albert Schweitzer, now of Africa, and Gunther Debin, a Lutheran pastor in the workingman's quarters of Berlin—probably no longer alive. The life stories and the spiritual grandeur of these men strengthen the reader's faith in the ultimate triumph of humanity on earth.

It is also in this section that Van Paassen has his tilt with the Roman Catholic Church. His language is not as acid as in his denunciation of Protestant formalism, but his charge is that the Church is seeking forcible religious domination over peoples not affiliated with Rome. It is the old tilt between Protestantism and Catholicism, coming to a new head in a new and highly explosive setting. Fittingly enough, the book ends with a sermon on the coming redemption and the coming happiness of man.

Everything Under Control

By Richard Armour

The publication of mystery novels will be strictly controlled in Italy, because they are considered harmful to the minds of fascist youth.—*News Item.*

IN the land of Mussolini
They are viewing with alarm:
The authorities are spleeny
When they think how great the harm

To the dormant cerebrations
Of impressionable youths,
Should the ratiocinations
Of detective-story sleuths

Interfere, despite hoodwinking
Of the best fascistic kind,
And evoke a little thinking
In the regimented mind.

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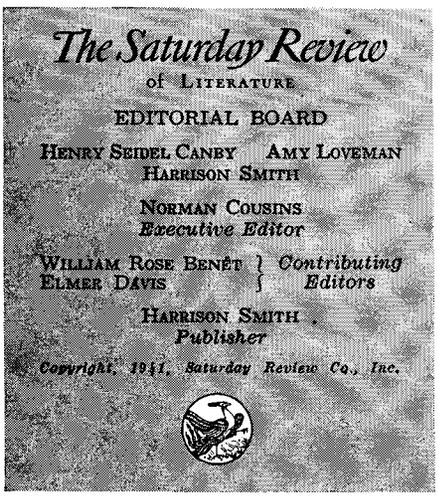

"MUSCLE AND PLUCK FOREVER!"

THE Fall Book Number of *The Saturday Review,* for which this editorial is written, is symptomatic of the methods of American publishing. We empty the barrels of accumulated manuscripts several times a year—in the Autumn when the new season begins, before Christmas when money is plentiful, in the Spring when readers are stocking up for the long vacations. And books—bad, good, and indifferent—are piled up like apples on roadside stands, with the more promising given preferred space.

The analogy is imperfect, for there is many a tasteless lump of a book that deserves, for its subject matter, the most careful reviewing. Yet it is complete enough to raise an interesting question as to the function of a literary review.

The publisher hopes that a reviewing journal will review all his books, and praise those he thinks he can sell. The historian wishes it to be a record of all kinds of publications. The critic desires an excuse to expand his theories. The librarian would like to know what books the people ought to read. The author wants space, position, and a sympathetic understanding of what he is trying to do. But what do the readers want—the readers of books and reviews of books, the readers who are neither specialists nor dumb?

They are eager to learn the answers to several questions—and it is doubtful whether they are getting all the answers satisfactorily from any literary review. They wish to know what are the good books. Perhaps they get that answer through the general consensus of critical opinion. And if the critics differ sharply, the advertisers, like counsels for the defense addressing a jury, see to it that the most favorable criticisms have a second day in court.

The readers wish to know what are the good books for *them.* This is a very different question, which is answered only by the most skillful and intuitive reviewers. All the weight of academic training in literature (and despite the popular opinion to the contrary, reviewers for good critical journals are highly trained) is thrown against the right answer to that question. For the student of literature has been taught to estimate in absolutes. His pedagogy has concerned itself with oughts. His comparisons are inevitably with good books that have been good in earlier periods. He will pick unfailingly the book that has attributes of a classic as classics have been in 1880 or 1780. And he will miss, now and then, a new type of good book sprung from the needs of the present; and, what is more serious because much more frequent, he will fail to see the values for 1941 of books that may have no lasting value, but are precisely the food which the present craves.

Nevertheless, the competence of the best American reviewers is high, both in the fields of creative art and in scholarship. Sooner or later the general reader is likely to find out what are the books good for him. But he has other questions, where the answers are badly adapted to his needs, if not missing altogether. The number of books reviewed in, let us say, the Fall Book issues of *The New York Times, Herald Tribune,* and *The Saturday Review* is appalling. A percentage of these books is very good, a percentage is useful, a large percentage is mediocre, a smaller percentage definitely bad.

Why publishers publish so many mediocre books—just pretty good books, books that don't quite come off, books with a good heart in a flabby body, books with no heart or blood at all in a conventional frame, phoney books, synthetic books—it is not necessary to discuss here. There are reasons, not always good ones, for the publication of most. Yet there can be no doubt that the intelligent reader very much desires to be protected against books of this kind. By the law of averages, he will pick one up, borrow one, buy one, too often to be funny. It may be said that the reviewers should protect him. That is what reviewers are for. But any old hand at criticism will tell you that the most difficult book of all to review is the mediocre book. There is always something to be said for it, and something against it, so that when the reviewer has finished with his balancing, he has written just the kind of review that nobody reads—or if any one does read it, he emerges knowing little more than that there is this to be said and then that. The truth is, that the only useful review for the general reader of a mediocre book is the statement that it *is* mediocre. And this means, of course, that the reviewer must have judgment enough to be right, and to be believed to be right.

American criticism through the recent years of the struggle of ideologies has been vigorous, audacious—and (unhappily) bigoted. It is beginning to recover its poise without losing its force. American reviewing of current books for the general reader has been mild, diffuse, distracted. Two-thirds of its energy and half its space has been wasted upon the analyses of mediocre books. A courageous literary journal would say they were mediocre, and let it go at that. In the long run, every one would benefit, including the publishers, and the authors, some of whom would wisely stop writing, and others write better.

The last question the general reader wants answered is, what are the bad books? And here he deserves two answers, not *one.* He should be told that certain categories of books—sentimental fictional slush, for example—are bad because human tastes are what they are, and that such and such a book belongs to one of these categories and is not for him unless he likes garbage or cosmetics. And he should be told why much cleverer and more delusive books—often boomed to the skies by their publishers—are essentially bad although written to appear the opposite. Here the reviewer needs courage, for he must resist what the opposition will make to seem praise dripping from the skies.

But courage pays if it has judgment behind it. And it is courage and judgment and a concentration upon books worth reviewing that the public wants in a journal of critical opinion and the facts about literature.

H. S. C.

The Tear

By Sara Van Alstyne Allen

WITHIN this single drop,
Bitter and round,
There may be found
The shape of a lost pearl.
Here is no jewel
To soothe the open palm
To curve, remote and cool
Between the rounded breasts.
Let time distil this single drop
That mocks the falling rain,
That leaves upon the lips
The rough, salt taste of pain.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"The Democratic Spirit"

SIR:—May I add my two cents to the discussion around James Truslow Adams's review of Bernard Smith's anthology of writings on democracy? For the sake of brevity, let me enumerate:

1. Mr. Smith, in his reply to Mr. Adams, consciously or otherwise leaves the implication that this was the only review which took exception to the inclusion of communists and notorious fellow-travellers—in short, enemies of democracy—in his anthology. The fact is that all other reviews which I've read (though admittedly I haven't read them all) made the same point as Mr. Adams did—and some of them are far beyond the range of "tory" epithets such as Mr. Smith hurls. I recall one that said, in effect, Mr. Smith seeks to establish a kind of apostolic succession from the Founding Fathers to Stalin's boys and girls in our midst. Another referred to the shock with which, towards the end of a book devoted to democracy, he was suddenly confronted with excerpts from people notoriously the spokesmen of a totalitarian regime.

2. Mr. Smith does not, in his reply, identify his own politics. The simple fact is that he has been a familiar figure on the periphery of the communist movement where so many of his latterday "democratic" spokesmen move. He did not hesitate to tell me personally that he was communistic in his views in accepting a book of mine for publication some years ago. He did not hesitate to attach his name to communist-inspired documents whitewashing Stalin's blood purges. His implication that it is "libel" to refer to his political leanings is a most strange attitude for the self-anointed anthologist of democratic ideology. It seems to me reasonable for Mr. Adams, and the public, to ask whether Mr. Smith's political orientation qualifies him as anthologist on the subject of democracy.

3. It seems to me no less reasonable to ask whether Mr. Smith would have considered it right to include in his book indictments of the evils of democracy by men and women notoriously committed to the defense of Hitler's crimes. Assuming that his answer is in the negative, why does he make so many and such pointed quotations from men and women committed to the defense of Stalin's crimes? The least that his readers deserved was a tip-off that the people quoted offer Stalinist totalitarianism as the cure for the evils they depict.

EUGENE LYONS.

New York, N. Y.

"Murder for Pleasure"

SIR:—With all the running comment caused by Haycroft's "Murder for Pleasure," I am tempted to rely on my memory that Poe first voiced the sentiments of improbabilities and impossibilities. And I'm further reminded that Rex Stout has said, "Elimination (of suspects) as such is tommy rot. Innocence is a negative and cannot be established, you can only establish guilt." This settles nothing but at least gives everyone something else to argue about.

ALFRED MAASS.

Antioch College
Yellow Springs, Ohio.

"The idea is good but your characters aren't so hot, the narrative leaves me cold, your style is dry, and the plot's all wet."

SRL Index

SIR:—May I add my second to E. J. Neumayer's motion favoring an index to *SRL* "every six months or so"?

Such an addition would increase the already-great value of your publication for all of your readers.

T. P. SNOW.

Seattle, Wash.

SRL Cover

SIR:—Congratulations on the new cover of *SRL!*

Please do not revert to the old gory and black one.

Yours gratefully,
R. H. DOREMUS.

Montclair, N. J.

O. Henry?

SIR:—I just now noticed "Who Wrote This?" by Channing Pollock, page 12, issue of August 30, 1941. I don't remember reading the story, but the bizarre situation and the surprising twist given to the plot certainly suggest O. Henry.

GEORGE J. MURPHY.

Miles City, Montana.

First Prize

SIR:—Since I happen to have read Morgan's "What Nietzsche Means" and McGovern's "From Luther to Hitler" with some care, I have gone through the review of the two books by Professor Jacques Barzun in the *SRL* of September 27 with great interest. Rarely have I read so just, so discriminating, and so informative a review of any book as is this one. Let other reviewers take it as a model

EDGAR S. BRIGHTMAN.

Newton Center, Mass.

Information, Please

SIR:—In coöperation with The Bibliographical Society of America, a group of bibliographers is at work on an index of Nineteenth Century American Book Publishers. It will include a short history of each firm, a list of the imprints used, and a list of material about the firm.

The group is anxious to hear from readers who have information that can be used, and will also be glad to help in any research now going on. The members of the group are Anne M. Boyd, Sidney Kramer, Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, Frederic G. Melcher, Barrows Mussey, Rollo G. Silver, and John Cook Wyllie.

Communications may be addressed to George L. McKay, Permanent Secretary, The Bibliographical Society of America, 47 East 60th St., New York, N. Y.

ROLLO G. SILVER.

New York, N. Y.

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The Preaching Humorist

By E. B. WHITE and KATHARINE S. WHITE

ANALYSTS have had their go at humor, and I have read some of this interpretative literature, but without being greatly instructed. Humor can be dissected, as a frog can, but the thing dies in the process and the innards are discouraging to any but the purely scientific mind.

A certain type of humor has come to be big business in the United States. The gag factories are as impressive as Allis Chalmers, and will probably soon be taken over for defense purposes. Radio comedians employ their own corps of geniuses, who sit and think and think of something funny to say. It is sometimes rather grim business, this production for the big markets. In a newsreel theater the other day I saw a picture of a man who had developed the soap bubble to a higher point than it had ever before reached. He had become the ace soap bubble blower of America, had perfected the business of blowing bubbles, refined it, doubled it, squared it, and had even worked himself up into a convenient lather. The effect was not pretty. Some of the bubbles were too big to be beautiful, and the blower was always jumping into them or out of them, or playing some sort of unattractive trick with them. It was, if anything, a rather repulsive sight. Humor is a little like that: it won't stand much blowing up, and it won't stand much poking. It has a certain fragility, an evasiveness, which one had best respect. Essentially, it is a complete mystery.

One of the things commonly said about humorists is that they are really very sad people—clowns with a breaking heart. There is some truth in it, but it is badly stated. It would be more accurate, I think, to say that there is a deep vein of melancholy running through everyone's life and that a humorist, perhaps more sensible of it than some others, compensates for it actively and positively. Practically everyone is a manic depressive of sorts, with his up moments and his down moments, and you certainly don't have to be a humorist to taste the sadness of situation and mood. But, as everyone knows, there is often a rather fine line between laughing and crying, and if a humorous piece of writing brings a person to the point where his emotional responses are untrustworthy and seem likely to break over into the opposite realm, it is because humorous writing, like poetical writing, has an extra content. It plays, like an active child, close to the big hot fire which is Truth. And sometimes the reader feels the heat.

The world likes humor, but it treats it patronizingly. It decorates its serious artists with laurel, and its wags with Brussels-sprouts. It feels that if a thing is funny it can be presumed to be something less than great, because if it were truly great it would be wholly serious. Writers know this, and those who take their literary selves with great seriousness are at considerable pains never to associate their name with anything funny or flippant or nonsensical or "light." They suspect it would hurt their reputation, and they are right. Many a poet writing today signs his real name to his serious verse and a pseudonym to his comical verse, being unwilling to have the public discover him in any but a pensive and heavy moment. It is a wise precaution. (It is often a bad poet, too.)

When I was reading over some of the parody diaries of Franklin P. Adams, I came across this entry, for April 28, 1926:

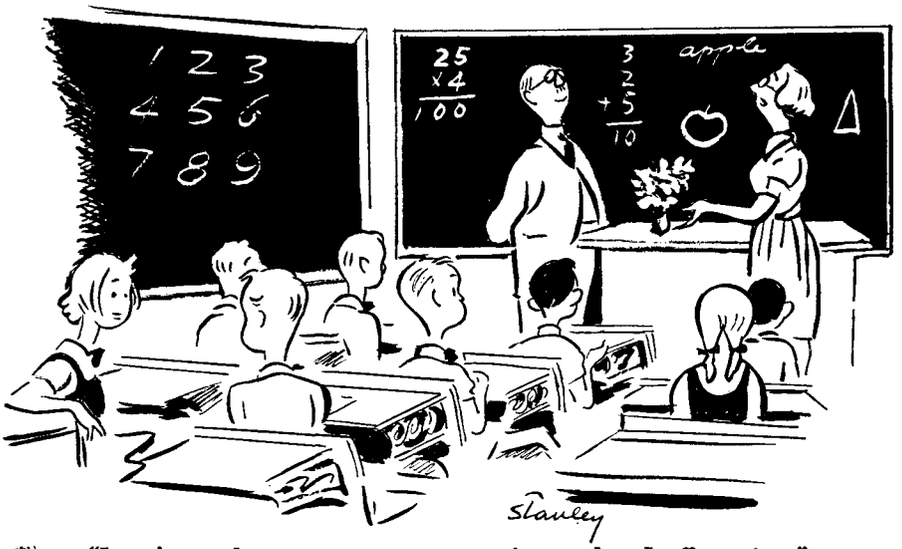
"Read H. Canby's book, 'Better Writing,' very excellent. But when he says, 'A sense of humor is worth gold to any writer,' I disagree with him vehemently. For the writers who amass the greatest gold have, it seems to me, no sense of humor; and I think also that if they had, it would be a terrible thing for them, for it would paralyze then so that they would not write at all. For in writing, emotion is more to be treasured than a sense of humor, and the two are often in conflict."

That is a sound observation. The conflict is fundamental. There constantly exists, for a certain sort of person of high emotional content, at work creatively, the danger of coming to a point where something cracks within himself or within the paragraph under construction—cracks and turns into a snicker. Here, then, is the very nub of the conflict: the careful form of art, and the careless shape of life itself. What a man does with this uninvited snicker (which may closely resemble a sob, at that) decides his destiny. If he resists it, conceals it, destroys it, he may keep his architectural scheme intact and save his building, and the world will never know. If he gives in to it, he becomes a humorist, and the sharp brim of the fool's cap leaves a mark forever on his brow.

I'm sure there isn't a humorist alive but can recall the day, in the early stages of his career, when someone he loved and respected took him anxiously into a corner and asked him when he was "going to write something serious." That day is memorable, for it gives a man pause to realize that the bright star he is following is held to be not of the first magnitude.

I think the stature of humor must vary some with the times. The court fool in Shakespeare's day had no social standing and was no better than a lackey, but he did have some artistic standing and was listened to with considerable attention, there being a well-founded belief that he had the truth hidden somewhere about his person. Artistically he stood probably higher than the humorist of today, who has gained social position but not the ear of the mighty. (Think of the trouble the world would save itself if it would pay some attention to nonsense!) A narrative poet at court, singing of great deeds, enjoyed a higher standing than the fool and was allowed to wear fine clothes; yet I suspect that the ballad singer was more often than not a second-rate stooge, flattering his monarch lyrically, while the fool must often

(*Continued on page* 37)



"I can't get them to answer any questions unless I offer prizes."

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Mr. Huxley's Father Joseph

GREY EMINENCE. By Aldous Huxley. New York: Harper & Bros. 1941. 342 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

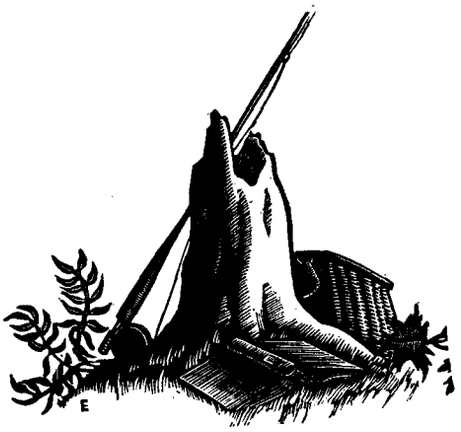
Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

THE rather tame promise of the jacket, that this is "a biography of Father Joseph, the right-hand man and collaborator of Cardinal Richelieu" is indeed amply fulfilled. But just as no novel of Aldous Huxley's was ever simply a novel (there are indeed taxonomists of literature for whom no novel of his was ever properly a novel) so this, his first biography, is at the very least much more than a biography.

It is in part an account, in broad but never text-bookish lines, of the power politics of the early seventeenth century which prepared the way for the French attempt to do what the Germans are attempting to do today—that is, to organize by force an international, or rather supernational, New Order in Europe; and more particularly, of the part played by the Capuchin monk Father Joseph, who had once been Baron de Maffliers, in these power politics. In this, the simplest part of the book, all Mr. Huxley's remarkable powers of narration and of lucid analysis of the "determining conditions" of historical events come into play, and produce a historical work of a very high order, an order sometimes misleadingly called "philosophical." Some of his better-known gifts come also into play. The Aldous Huxley—or is it the old Adam?—who wrote "Antic Hay" can still describe the portraits of Queen Marie Médicis as revealing "a large, fleshy, gorgeously bedizened barmaid." The lover of paradox can still write of Father Joseph, "combining in his own person the oddly assorted characters of Metternich and Savonarola, he could play the diplomatic game with twice the ordinary number of trump cards." And the young modern whose learning was so delightfully, so scabrously, indecent is still able to turn that learning into satire—satire that, like much of Swift's, will be relished by some of his poor, human readers as something rather less exalted than satire: witness, for instance, his description of the painting Rubens would have made of the miraculous cure of Cardinal Richelieu's piles by St. Fiacre, if only St. Fiacre's cure had worked.

But, as critics have noticed, something is happening to the bright young modern. The Voltaire of our Freudian age is turning mystic. "Grey Eminence" is in a part a discourse on mysticism, which, after a very brief account of the Hindu origins and early Christian development of the mystical tradition, dwells more at length on Father Joseph's teacher, Benet Fitch of Canfield, and on his contemporary, Pierre de Bérulle. Mr. Huxley, like his semantically innocent predecessors in the mystical tradition, who were unable to appeal to Professor Bridgman's "Logic of Modern Physics," cannot break down entirely the wall which separates the mystical experience from the best and noblest and simplest of words. Reduced to words, Mr. Huxley frequently uses Father Benet's phrase, "active annihilation," and his own "one-pointedness," to attempt to describe the mystical experience of oneness with God.

That experience, he insists, is a fact, and subject therefore to what Professor Bridgman calls an operational test. The metaphysical and theological theories which mystics have often used to explain this experience (and sometimes to conceal from themselves the fact that they have not really achieved it in fullness) are not for him facts, but meaningless theories. Here, he maintains, Father Joseph went astray, so far astray that he could try to combine power politics with the mystic life; for under the influence of Father Benet's aberrant acceptance of certain Catholic dogmas as a part of the mystic life, he could identify the glory of France with the will of God. For the psychic goings-on, from miracles to plain catalepsy, which are frequently manifested in the behavior of the apprentice mystic, Mr. Huxley has almost as little regard as for metaphysical or theological theories; to these curiosities of the psychophysical mechanism "the wiser mystics pay as little attention as possible." There remains the long hard way to "active annihilation" which the gifted few must learn by practice under the teaching of a master, as those gifted in the less important wordly skills, like painting or tennis-playing, must learn. Mere reading, even reading great works with high emotion, will no more make a mystic than such reading will make a tennis player.



A persistent hangover from his eighteenth-century upbringing tempts this reviewer to object to Mr. Huxley's use of Bridgman, that, although everybody, given the proper scientific education, can make the necessary operational test to determine whether what a physicist says is "true," very few people can make the necessary operational test to determine whether what a mystic says is "true." It is, however, plain that in fact ordinary people can no more be educated at present to perform such a test on the work of Professor Bridgman, who is a very good physicist, than they can be educated to perform such a test on the work of Swedenborg, who seems to have been a somewhat muddled mystic. Modern physics is at least as far from common sense experience as is mysticism. There seems indeed to be more agreement among physicists than among mystics. The systems of these latter seem almost as varied and clashing as the systems of philosophers. But according to Mr. Huxley, this is only because unwise mystics have been led to formulate systems. On the central core of their experience they are in discernible agreement. We shall probably have to grant Mr. Huxley his operational test, even though we cannot possibly make it ourselves. Certainly his is the most lucid exposition of mysticism available to the general reader.

Finally, "Grey Eminence," like so much else that appears in print today, is concerned to find a way out of our present difficulties. Mr. Huxley despairs completely of politics. The road trod by Father Joseph's bare feet has led straight to totalitarian society, which Mr. Huxley apparently thinks as inevitable for the democracies as for the rest of the world. Our only hope is in small groups "on the margin," which, under the leadership of a few "theocentric saints" will practise "goodness politics" instead of power politics. Only small groups can practise such politics, since "the quality of moral behavior varies in inverse ratio to the number of human beings involved." The immediate outlook is thus very dark. At most, such small groups can perform a certain antiseptic and antidotal function in our society, and preserve it from total ruin. "Society can never be greatly improved, until such time as most of its members chose to become theocentric saints." And cease to write books?

Crane Brinton, author of "The Anatomy of Revolution," is Professor of History at Harvard University.

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The Saturday Review about

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BY EDMUND WILSON

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Almanac for Fall Reading

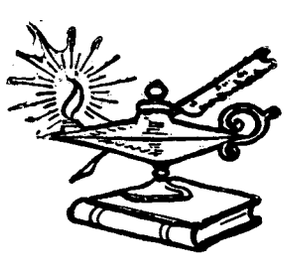
AMY LOVEMAN

October 20

◆A dazzling personality, red-headed, impulsive, and determined, Barbara Villiers, mistress of Charles II of England walks out of history to love and play and charm in Margaret Gilmour's biography, *The Great Lady.* ◆Max Miller deserts the waterfront of California for the rest of the state, describing the golden enchantment of its life in *It Must Be the Climate.* ◆California may be lovely but Hawaii is very heaven to judge from the title of Walker Winslow's novel built about a young psychiatrist's experiences on the island, *Man in Paradise.* ◆Less pleasant but a place to haunt the imagination is the scene of Cecile Huise Matschat's detective story, *Murder in Okefenokee,* the great swamp which Miss Matschat described in an earlier book on the Suwanee River. ◆Adventure and bandits galore make their bow in Charles B. Driscoll's *Pirates Ahoy!* ◆Music to soothe the savage breast will be found in David Hall's *Record Book Supplement,* which rounds up and adds to the original work records of the last twelve months. The book's an open sesame to good music. ◆Edgar Johnson in *A Treasury of Biography* presents skillfully chosen extracts from some of the great biographies of all ages, supplying deft connecting passages, where cuts have been made to hold the narrative taut. The busy man's short cut to some of the best reading to be found. ◆Armchair travellers can go ajourneying in Charles Edward Crane's *Winter in Vermont,* and Nancy Wilson Ross's *Furthest Reach* which last makes the states of Oregon and Washington regions far too interesting to be visited only vicariously. ◆Diplomatic Washington at its teas, minding its p's and q's or becoming embroiled in social difficulties that are incidentally part of affairs of state, is depicted in *Washington Waltz,* by Helen Lombard, wife of a member of the French Embassy. ◆Unhappy, far-off things are recounted in a book whose title, however, sounds a note of hope in *The End Is Not Yet: China at War* by Herryman Maurer. ◆Big business after the depression and the impact of changing business outlooks on its methods and chances form the background for the interesting novel in which John Harriman follows *The Career of Philip Hazen,* who loses out in Wall Street deals but wins at love and character. ◆H. L. Mencken looks back over the early years of his journalistic experience in *Newspaper Days,* letting the reader in on some secret passages and pranks of his novitiate as well as giving him insight into the ways and workings of newspaperdom. Highly entertaining reading. ◆A puff of wind, a gentle breeze, a vigorous blow, and at last a hurricane—that's the course that's plotted in *Storm,* a novel which is also a study in meteorology, and which George R. Stewart makes exciting both as science and as an adventure story.

October 21

◆Readers who sigh with satisfaction at the prospect of a good substantial novel—hundreds of pages which in older times would have made a three-decker—will have a chance to indulge their inclination in *The Ivory Mischief,* by Arthur Meeker, Jr., whose background is the time of Louis XIV but whose tale of two beautiful sisters has the contemporaneity of any full-bodied and psychologically interesting romance. ◆And for those who love a doctor novel there's *Bright Scalpel,* by Elizabeth Seifert, while for the readers who want their fiction up to the moment in subject matter, *All That Seemed Final,* a tale of the English, laid mainly in the London of 1939 to 1940, by Joan Colebrook, and *The Fort,* by Storm Jameson, which plays in a ruined cellar in wartime Paris where a group of men are gathered together with one in command who suddenly realizes that this moment in the present war is paralleling an experience of his in the last conflict, are coming along. ◆Told with reverence and touching piety, John W. Lynch's *A Woman Wrapped in Silence,* is the story of Mary and Christ in verse. ◆There's a chance to get perspective on the ideologies of recent times, their economic and political origins and their influence on the present, in Oscar Cargill's *Intellectual America,* subtitled *Ideas on the March.* ◆What the *Economic Consequences of the Second World War* are likely to be is discussed by Lewis L. Lewin. ◆There's a spate of books on the arts, *The American Artist and His Times,* by Homer Saint Gaudens, *The Art of Walt Disney,* by Robert D. Field, *The Best Plays of 1940-41,* and *The Year Book of the Drama in America,* edited by Burns Mantle, *The Early Chirico,* by James Thrall Soby, the only monograph in English on its subject. ◆There's an authorized biography, too, of *John McCormack,* in which L. A. G. Strong writes sympathetically of the singer, and a volume of the hilarious sketches by Cornelia Otis Skinner with which that excellent monologuist delights her audiences. It's called *Soap behind the Ears.* ◆The lovers of diaries and letters will welcome Ernest de Selincourt's edition of *The Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth* and the romantic soul will rejoice in *Love Letters of Famous Men and Women* in which Ernest F. Dell lets queens like Anne Boleyn and Victoria rub elbows with democratic Americans and men and women, titled and untitled, of other lands. ◆Help's to hand for the admirers of Gwen Bristow's novels whose shelf space is limited for the three tales which have made her reputation have been gathered into one volume, *The Louisiana Trilogy.* ◆Nard Jones furnishes a historical romance in *Scarlet Petticoat* which carries its heroine, a Portsmouth barmaid, from England to America and portrays the experiences of the first white woman to settle in the Northwest in 1823. Based on a true incident. ◆Sturdy womanhood in a later period is pictured in the reminiscences which Frances Ellen Fitz put in Jerome Odlum's hands to weave into a lively chronicle in *Lady Sourdough.* The lady of the title went off to Alaska, where she lived the rough life of the men, matched them at their own endeavors, and made her pile with the best of them. ◆Red letter day for *The Saturday Review.* Its contributing editor, William Rose Benét publishes *The Dust Which Is God,* an autobiographical novel in verse. Take it from us who are not impartial—it's good.



October 22

◆George Russell Harrison's stimulating discussion of physics in its present aspects entitled *Atoms in Action* makes its reappearance with the addition of a chapter on Machines in War to give it fresh timeliness. ◆With Moscow holding the headlines there's special aptness in the publication of Eric Estorick's *Stafford Cripps.* ◆In her account of the experiences of an American-born Polish woman's *Arrest and Exile*—Madame Kochanka was caught in the Russian invasion of her country and sent to Siberia—Lilian Mowrer tells a horrifying tale of suffering and an inspiriting one of human courage. ◆Two books appear bearing on the countries at war, Hitler's *Counterfeit Reich,* by Karl Robert, a study of Nazi economy, and *Thailand: The New Siam,* by Virginia Thompson. ◆Battles long ago are recalled in a biography of *Clara Barton,* by Blanche Colton Williams, who paints a sympathetic picture of this "daughter of destiny" whom the soldiers of the Civil War came to know so well and who was the founder of the Red Cross in America. ◆It's a long jump from Miss Barton to *Women*

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of Crime but the publication date of Florence Monahan's study of female miscreants brackets them. ◆ For the Miscellany shelf: *From Man to Machine,* by Agnes Rogers, a pictorial history of inventions with expository captions; *The Jazz Record Book,* by Charles Edward Smith, Frederic Ramsey, Jr., and William Russell; *The Quizmakers Giant Quiz Book,* by Slifer and Louise Crittenden, and *A Thesaurus of Quotations,* edited by Edmund Fuller.

October 23

◆ American municipal politics are shown in their machinations and corruption in George Cronyn's story of *Caesar Stagg,* the boss of an American city. ◆ Kim San and Nym Wales between them have produced a chronicle of Korean revolt and the Canton commune in *Song of Ariran.* ◆ There's a great deal of charm in Elizabeth Mitchell's *Music with a Feather Duster,* the reminiscences of a music lover. ◆ Henry Torres, a member of the Chamber of Deputies and a noted lawyer of France, publishes a life of *Laval.* ◆ Instead of the terror in France today Henry Farrand Griffin's *The White Cockade* tells in fiction form of the period officially designated as *The Terror,* leaving it behind for better things when the narrative turns to the American frontier and its hero's experiences there.

October 24

◆ Interventionists will find highly illuminating Forrest Davis's account of past collaboration between England and America in *The Atlantic System: England and America since 1890.* ◆ Egon Erwin Kisch, Czecho-Slovakian journalist whose contacts have been numerous and experiences highly interesting, writes delightfully of them in *Sensation Fair.* ◆ John Maloney, who has served with the Red Cross in the countries under the heel of the invader, writes with compassion and knowledge of what he has seen in *Let There Be Mercy.* ◆ In *The Mayfield Deer* Mark Van Doren has taken an old folk tale and converted it into a stirring narrative poem. ◆ Happy days lie ahead for lovers of music in the charming *Treasury of Gilbert and Sullivan* which contains some of the favorite songs. ◆ Ben Hecht, who many years ago won praise with his vignettes of Chicago, issues *1001 Afternoons in New York,* sketches grave and gay of Manhattan which appeared originally in the newspaper *P.M.* ◆ Lovers of cats will rejoice in Alice Grant Rosman's *Nine Lives,* the story of a puss who turned from a plain black cat into an aristocratic Siamese.

October 25

◆ Gilbert Chase interprets *The Music of Spain,* following its development from the days of the early churchmen to the present. ◆ A poet who had much to say to an earlier day when human liberties were at stake is por-

(*Continued on page* 24)

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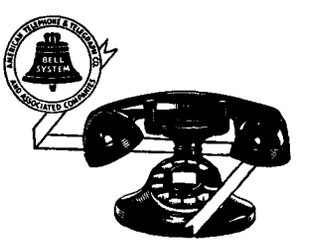

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(*Continued from page* 21)

trayed in Whitman Bennett's *Whittier: Bard of Freedom.*

October 27

◆ Germany has had leaders before Hitler, as Robert Ergang indicates in the title of *The Potsdam Führer.* This is a biography of Frederick William I, the founder of the dire Prussian militarism which has wreaked such havoc on the world. ◆Even though Mr. Dooley's reputation was made during the course of another and lesser war, he's still fresh in the hearts iv his countrymen who can read of his career, or that of the man behind his name, in E. Ellis's *Mr. Dooley's America: Life of Finley Peter Dunn.* ◆ Students of history will find a careful study of Civil War campaigns in Stanley F. Horn's *The Army of Tennessee.* ◆ The pageant of the railroad passes by in Edward P. Alexander's *Iron Horses,* a study of the American locomotive.

October 28

◆ Salvador de Madariaga has made the most of colorful material in his *Hernan Cortés,* a scholarly and spirited account of the great Conquistador which, like Prescott's, is admiring of its hero whom it depicts as a great but, in the end, a disappointed man. ◆ Libraries and students of politics will have to reserve space on their shelves for *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1937-1940* issued on this day. ◆ Stuart Cloete, who has made himself the exponent in fiction of Boer annals, in *The Hill of Doves* tells a tale of South Africa during the Boer War of 1880. ◆ John Masefield goes further back in time—to the Byzantium of Justinian—in *Conquer,* a novelette dealing with the Nika revolt.

October 29

◆ There may not be many to agree with Louis Adamic in the plan for international peace advanced in *Two Way Passage* but at least all will admit that his scheme for handing the post-war patrolling of Europe over to Americans of foreign birth is ingenious. ◆ John Gunther, whose "Inside" books still flourish as the green bay tree, adds another to the number in *Inside Latin America.* ◆ Gerald W. Johnson shows an unpartisan spirit in debating a hotly controversial subject in *Roosevelt: Dictator or Democrat?* ◆ A mass of varied and interesting information makes for good reading as well as helpful reference in *The Story of Everyday Things,* by Arthur Train, Jr. ◆ Frances Winwar, whose vivid style and careful research have won popularity for earlier biographical studies, now presents in *American Giant,* a study of Whitman and his times.

October 30

◆ Just in time to serve as Book-of-the-Month Club companion to John Gunther's *Inside Latin America,* comes a delightful autobiography by T. R. Ybarra, who, sprung of a New England family on one side and a Venezuelan on the other, writes with contagious zest of a life colored by its heritage from both in *Young Man of Caracas.* ◆ To continue the interest in South America which the foregoing books should rouse, there's Farrar & Rinehart's Latin American prize winning novel, *Broad and Alien Is the World,* by Cino Algería, a tale of the North Andean Indians. ◆Dramatic adventure gets its innings in Osa Johnson's *Four Years in Paradise,* an account of her husband's experiences in photographing the life span of a lion near Abyssinia. ◆ Adventures of far different sort are chronicled in Martin Gumpert's *First Papers,* the stirring and moving chronicle of an immigrant's discovery of America. ◆Norris Houghton, in *Advance from Broadway,* discusses the Broadway stage and the theatre of the road.

October 31

◆ Germany to the fore again on this day with *Satan in Top Hat,* by Tibor Koeves, a biography of Fritz von Papen, and *Is Tomorrow Hitler's?* by H. R. Knickerbocker. ◆ France, advancing toward mortal combat with Germany in the events of the years 1889-1914, constitutes the background of Louis Aragon's novel *The Century Was Young.* ◆ For the musical and the artistic the day brings *Concert Life in New York,* by Richard Aldrich, and *U. S. Camera, 1942,* edited by T. J. Maloney. ◆And for the literary there's Arthur Hobson Quinn's *Edgar Allan Poe: A Critical Study.* ◆ *Our Miss Boo* makes a winsome appear-

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ance in Margaret Lee Runbeck's story of a little girl.

November 1

◆ There's something new under the sun as the interesting presentation of the King James version of the Bible in *The Bible of Today,* edited by John Sterling, demonstrates. ◆ Ready for the time when that country takes the first page again is Emil Lengyel's *Dakar.*

November 3

◆ The eighties come into their own once more in Edna Ferber's novel, *Saratoga Trunk,* where aristocrats and plutocrats, gamblers and prostitutes strut their day in Saratoga and New Orleans. ◆ Behind the personality of a fictitious friend, Van Wyck Brooks sets forth his credo of literature and politics, together with much searching comment on contemporary American writing, in *The Opinions of Oliver Allston.* ◆ Robert Nathan recounts the warlike adventures of a Yorkshire terrier in *Tapiola's Brave Regiment.* ◆ Wallace McElroy's *Days Are as Grass,* winner of the first Knopf Literary Fellowship, a novel of Kentucky, makes its appearance.

November 4

◆ Here's a day for the fans, detective story and baseball, with *The Corpse and the Three Ex-Husbands,* by Sue MacVeigh, and *With This Ring,* by Mignon Eberhart, for the former, and a biography of the Yankee's beloved first baseman, *Lou Gehrig: The Iron Horse of Baseball,* by Richard Hables, for the latter.

November 5

◆ E. M. Almedingen's *Tomorrow Will Come,* the chronicle of a Russian woman's struggle for existence after the fall of her world was caused by the Bolshevist Revolution, makes absorbing reading, and is inspiriting in its portrayal of human courage and endurance. ◆ Robert Greenwood, author of *Love on the Dole,* writes a touching novel of the small man in *Mr. Bunting in Peace and War.* ◆ Ireland and its aristocrats and peasantry of the eighteenth century drawing toward violent collision give bustle and stir to Oliver St. John Gogarty's *Mad Grandeur.* ◆ Charles Morgan's *The Empty Room* introduces a doctor engaged in defense work and gives the author opportunity to speak his mind in regard to a free world. ◆ A famous work appears in an abbreviated form in George Macaulay Trevelyan's *Shortened History of England.* ◆ Very charming indeed does Peggy Wood appear in her autobiography *How Young You Look,* and that with all due modesty on her part.

November 6

◆ Margaret Macprang McKay pictures Tientsin in the eighties in *Valiant Dust,* a good novel of China. ◆ The *O Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories* make their appearance with Herschel Brickell's name as editor for

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By Jonathan Daniels

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An engaging story of travel in Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, Turkey and Greece, ancient countries whose names are flashing through our present-day headlines. A book filled with the customs, legends and history of these Middle East lands, and above all interpreting the people who live there. Some of the material is revised from the author's earlier books, but most of it is entirely new.

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the first time. ◆ Those delightful editors, E. B. and K. S. White, who have been responsible for so much of the sparkle and caustic commentary of *The New Yorker,* offer excellent entertainment to the public in *A Subtreasury of Humor* in which many of the well-chosen selections are drawn from the columns of their own magazine. ◆ Charles Nordhoff and James Norden Hall continue their collaboration in *Botany Bay,* a tale of the Australian penal colony in which an American plays a leading part.

November 10

◆ Rejoice with a mighty rejoicing for the *1942 New Yorker Album* is here. ◆ *War and the German Mind,* by William K. Pfeiler, and *The Balance Sheet of the Future,* by Ernest Bevin, discuss one the shape of things in the past and the other that of things to come.

November 11

◆ Another Red Letter day for the *S.R.L.* Norman Cousins issues the first volume of a study of democracy entitled *Good Inheritance. A Treasury of Democracy,* as the book is called, contains expressions of the democratic spirit from the ancients to the present day.

November 12

◆ Mary Ellen Chase publishes a full-bodied and leisurely chronicle novel, *Windswept,* covering the life of one man and introducing incidentally several generations of his family. ◆ What evil days the world has fallen upon since 1914 and the causes which have conduced to the parlous state of its affairs are the burden of a thoughtful book, *The World's Iron Age,* by William Henry Chamberlin, who arrives from his examination at an isolationist position.

November 13

◆ William L. White renders a report on England at war and on his private adventure there in adopting a child, in *Journey to Margaret.* ◆ Pleasantly flows the river in Arthur Bernon Tourtellot's *The Charles.* ◆ William Seabrook publishes a biography of *Doctor Wood: Modern Wizard of the Laboratory.*

November 14

◆ A volume of essays by Max Lerner, *Ideas for the Ice Age,* offers some cogent discussion of democracy and fascism, bolstered by historical illustration.

November 15

◆ H. J. Eckenrode and Bryan Conroe put forth a thesis which may startle some historians and students of the Civil War in *George B. McClellan: The Man Who Saved the Union.* ◆ Notabilities and eccentrics of California pass in parade in Miriam Allen de Ford's *They Were San Franciscans.*

November 17

◆ A great day for the mystery story fans with Ellery Queen's *101 Years Entertainment: The Great Detective Stories, 1841-1941,* and Farrar & Rinehart's *Third Mystery Book.* ◆ Emil Ludwig, who has taken most of the world for his province, turns to the homeland with *The Germans: Double History of a Nation.* ◆ Andrew Lytle writes a stirring story of love and adventure with Hernan de Soto for hero in *At The Moon's Inn.*

November 19

◆ Phyllis Bottome deals with humble human nature standing up nobly under suffering and danger in her novel of slum life, *London Pride.* ◆ There's something doing all the time—love, adventure, excitement in Louis Bromfield's *Wild Is the River,* a tale of New Orleans in Ben Butler's day. ◆ The recent death of the Justice lends pertinence to the publication of *The Brandeis Guide to the Modern World,* edited by Alfred Lief.

November 20

◆ Edna St. Vincent Millay presents her *Collected Sonnets.* ◆ Leo C. Rosten, otherwise known as Leonard Q. Ross, creator of H*Y*M*A*N K*A*P*L*A*N, puts out a careful sociological study in *Hollywood: The Movie Colony* which has much of the lively interest of the gossip columns. ◆ What Leon Trotsky thought of his enemy appears in his biography of *Stalin.*

Publishers Please Say When

◆ *Sea of Cortez,* by John Steinbeck and Edward T. Rickette. ◆ *Pied Piper,* by Nevil Shute. ◆ *The Doctors Mayo,* by H. B. Clapsattle. ◆ *Fountainheads of Freedom,* by Irwin Edman. ◆ *Miladi,* by Bradden Field. ◆ *Mission to Moscow,* by Upton Sinclair. ◆ *Frenchman's Creek,* by Daphne Du Maurier. *Admiral of the Ocean Sea: A Life of Columbus,* by Samuel Eliot Morison. *Along These Streets,* by Struthers Burt; *Knickerbocker Gardens,* by Caleb Bruce; *Green Centuries,* by Caroline Gordon; *The Heart of Another,* by Martha Gelhorn; *The Last Tycoon,* by F. Scott Fitzgerald; *Murder with Southern Hospitality,* by Leslie Ford; *The Social Life of a Modern Community,* by W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt; *The Haitian People,* by James G. Leyburn; *Byron in Italy,* by Peter Quennell.

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Old Park Row

JOSEPH PULITZER AND HIS WORLD. By James Lyman Barrett. New York: The Vanguard Press. 1941. 449 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

INTO this incisive, opinionated, and richly anecdotal volume the last city editor of the *World* has packed an immense amount of office legend and inside information. The book is above all else outspoken. Mr. Barrett, who came to New York from Denver journalism the year after Pulitzer died, of course never knew the great blind editor. But from scores of men who did know him he has taken what stories, sayings, and glimpses they could furnish, while he has delved into the files and other sources. He has tried, on the basis of this miscellany of information, to present the real Pulitzer, a genius more explosive, erratic, and dictatorial than the hero painted in Don C. Seitz's biography, and a leader whose constructive work was not unmarred by faults and errors. Mr. Barrett is equally outspoken in dealing with *World* history. The faults as well as virtues of outstanding figures in the history of that journal are frankly set forth. And when he comes to discuss the tragic demise of the sheet, the unhappiest event in the world history of American journalism, he minces no words in his analysis (which is not to this writer convincing) of the causes, and in his apportionment of responsibility.

Never was an institution more clearly the lengthened shadow of a man than the morning *World* was the shadow of Joseph Pulitzer. When he fixed his eyes upon a goal—and he was always struggling toward one—he was like an irresistible force of nature. Some of Mr. Barrett's hearsay stories

—*From the jacket*

Joseph Pulitzer

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WHITTIER:

BARD OF FREEDOM

By WHITMAN BENNETT

READERS of *Snow-Bound* will be startled to meet, here, a different Whittier: a fanatic in the cause of abolition; newspaper editor whose office was burned by a pro-slavery mob; influential member of the Massachusetts legislature and a power behind national politics. Illustrated with facsimiles of rare material and original photographs. *October 25,* $3.50

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By NORMAN FOERSTER and others. Five stimulating essays which examine the aims of literary history, criticism, and creative writing, challenge prevailing pedantries. *Oct. 25,* $3.00

The University of North Carolina Press

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INTELLECTUAL AMERICA

Ideas on the March

by Oscar Cargill

Editor of "American Literature"

Working with a new conception of historical change, Mr. Cargill traces today's dominant ideologies to their old world origins, and presents a dynamic interpretation of American culture and the forces which shaped it. Literature, philosophy, psychology and other intellectual movements are considered in what the Library Journal describes as "undoubtedly an important book."

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and some of the facts he has excavated from rival sheets about Pulitzer may lack authenticity; his style in narrating his tale may at times be too highly colored; but the final impression tallies with that of Alleyne Ireland's book and persuades us of its general accuracy. From beginning to end of his life Pulitzer was a fighter; never happy unless exchanging blows, and whether losing or winning, always emerging from one battle only to leap into another. He moved like a cyclone; his physical energy was that of a rocket until his health snapped, and his intellectual energy never diminished even when his nerves were intolerably frayed. He made bad mistakes—Mr. Barrett describes some of them—but his general direction was always right. The most impressive part of the biographical story here is the account of Pulitzer's herculean labors just after he bought the *World* in 1883; the long hours, loss of sleep, indifference to meals, nervous tension, and relentless strain of the "perfectionist-idealist" as he made the paper within a year a great national power. The most touching passage is the description of Pulitzer's last visit, one calm Sunday morning in 1908, to the *World* rooms.

The account of the *World* necessarily touches only a number of the high spots. For some reason Mr. Barrett says little of the Spanish War; perhaps because others have said so much of that jingo interlude. He tells again how much the *World* did to elect Cleveland, and how it quarrelled with him. He describes how, when the *World* grew too radical at the time of the Homestead strike to suit its owner, JP brought it over to another tack. The mudslinging of Charles A. Dana in the years when Dana had most reason to be jealous of Pulitzer is amply illustrated, and Pulitzer's shots in kind are summarized. We have here the fullest account in print of the famous battle between the *World* and Theodore Roosevelt over the *World's* charges regarding the disposition of the $40,000,000 paid to the French Government for the rights of the old Panama Company to the Isthmian route.

The final chapters of this gossippy, journalistically amusing book, dealing with the days of H. B. Swope, Heywood Broun, and Walter Lippmann, will interest the present and passing generations of newspaperman. But we may doubt whether Mr. Barrett accurately explains why the *World* so unfortunately died at the very time when America needed it. Perhaps the most fundamental explanation is that certain journalistic methods of Joseph Pulitzer did not fit the new era. What a tower of strength to democracy and a sane internationalism it might be today!

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"Lands of the Sun"

MIDDLE EAST. By H. V. Morton. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1941. 374 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by FAY GILLIS WELLS

MR. MORTON'S book is a timely and thoroughly informative guide to the "Lands of the Sun." Seasoned with imagination and a light touch, it will interest students of archeology, theology, psychology, and gastronomy, although, actually, as the introduction admits, it was compiled for the benefit of the soldiers in the British Army, who complained of the bulkiness of three of the author's other books on the Near and Middle East, which they were trying to use as Baedekers. Mr. Morton, who is known as the author of the Search books, took the essence of all three earlier volumes, added some pertinent data from his later travels through Turkey and Greece, and turned out the *Must* book on the Middle East for all those who are interested in that part of the world.

Morton is an avid traveller with a seemingly inexhaustible supply of knowledge at his finger tips and an unquenchable curiosity about the whys and wherefores of places, people, and history, of fact and legend. Like most travellers, he admits that he has been disillusioned and that on occasion, "I went away wishing that we might have known this place only in our hearts." On the other hand, he has been compelled to remark about a spot that "It is lovelier than imagination paints it."

The author never accepts facts at face value and "Middle East," which deals specifically with Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, Turkey, and Greece, is full of provocative questioning of accepted fact. Some of his investigations of, and conclusions regarding the origins of foods—he never is happy about a new dish until he has traced it through history—will intrigue the gourmets.

Morton's wealth of theological knowledge makes his wanderings through the Holy Land most illuminating. He points out that "to walk through Jerusalem is to walk through history," and leads you to the shores of the Lake of Galilee, where he watched "modern men acting quite unconsciously a sacred chapter of the Gospel."

The characteristic fish of the lake is the *musht*—"also called St. Peter's fish, for legend says that it was from the mouth of this fish that Peter took the tribute money." Mr. Morton was unwilling to accept this statement at face value, so he "opened the mouth of a *musht* and placed a ten piastre piece inside it (and) . . . the coin went in easily, for the mouth of this fish is out of all proportion to its size." Thus Morton satisfied himself that Peter actually could have found the piece of money in the mouth of the fish. In such fashion does he wander through the Middle East challenging history to prove it right or wrong. Nothing misses his eagle eye and he imparts it all to his readers with a delightful sense of understatement.

And to awaken those smug people who believe that "It Can't Happen Here," because of their country's inherent characteristics and traditions, the author reviews, for example, the history of Turkey, which in the last twenty-one years has repudiated every tradition of its centuries of existence.

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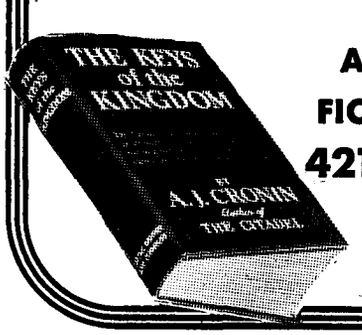

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Estes . . .

LONG WEEK END. By Harlow Estes. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1941. 310 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by PHIL STONG

THE Jukes family, the Benders, the Squeers clan of Dotheboys Hall seem mildly amiable in comparison with this upper-middle class gens of small-town Easterners evoked by Mrs. Estes. The publishers say that the book is "full of the amusing quirks and crotchets of human nature." Jesse James was a cute little cut-up, too. It is full of the meanness and viciousness of low-grade human nature.

The Chelseas are not criminals; they are respectable people. The leading male character is a publisher of sorts obsessed with family pride for which it is impossible to account. He invites a lady-errant, who has stirred his quince jelly blood, to spend a week-end with him to meet his family for diagnosis, implicitly preparatory to a proposal of marriage.

The poor idiot of a heroine, independent, easy-mannered, and easy-spoken, accepts the invitation for heaven knows what reason except that a few women have occasionally been found who don't have good sense. Livy meets successively, an aged and arthritic sparrow of a mother, who dictates by being dreadfuly hurt by almost everything; a complacent, boasting, bossy, Ladies' Club sister; and her husband, who just happens to be one of Livy's old lovers; a spinsterish, divorcée sister-in-law; a frightfully querulous and useless cook; two of the most horrible children since the great "Heartless Household"; a female Narcissus married to an oafish private school athletic coach; and an unpardonable cat.

The heroine's inexplicable and slightly lunatic passion for the bony, petulant, feeble hero is probably the item that is supposed to ennoble the text and interest one in the solution, but long before that comes about one has only the hope that Livy is an adept hatchet murderess who is quietly concealing her special skill for a suitable climax. But she doesn't perform and the reader's only consolation is that the heroine may have a little mantis blood in her. The lady mantis celebrates her nuptials by eating her mate.

Still, the annoyance which the story causes is good exercise for the emotions and a tribute to the art and fluency of the author.

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The Macmillan Co., New York

Carrick . . .

CONSIDER THE DAISIES. By Gertrude Carrick. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1941. 365 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by AMY LOVEMAN

THIS is that rare and difficult achievement, a really good college novel. Miss Carrick has caught the quality of those palpitant years when the campus is the world, and life and work and friendship are narrowed to a poignancy which later experience never recaptures to the same degree. They are young, and self-centered, and unformed, these girls of hers at Vassar, but they have the bright charm of youth, that eagerness so pathetic in its confidence, so vivid in its intensity. And they are no pasteboard figures but actual flesh-and-blood young women using the idiom of their day, busy, active creatures, ardent in their friendships, intent on their occupations, expectant of their world.

Flip, whose desire was to be a writer and who fell in love briefly with the instructor who encouraged her hopes; Jill, who rocked the campus with her play and could not make up her mind whether to be a great playwright or great actress in later life; Lee, whose charm rode triumphant over her faults —these are the figures around whom the story unfolds. For two years, the Junior and Senior, we follow them through the round of their days, classes, dorm gatherings, parties where the beer flows and whence they come home tight, visits from men, summer vacations, reunions, and at last Commencement and farewell. When she leaves them on the threshold of a fuller life, we know these girls Miss Carrick has described, share their hopes, rejoice in their triumphs, pity them their perplexities. So deft is she in her portrayal that each stands out sharply individualized and yet all are developed through their relations with one another. This is college in true perspective, with the proper emphasis on the things that make its world. Sex has its part in its interest, but not, as in so many stories of university life, to the exclusion of all else; work and play take their proper place; friendship has sentiment without sentimentality, and love just brushes the emotions of the girls. One reads Miss Carrick's book with enjoyment and leaves it with excitement, as youth, its foot on the accelerator, rides exultantly into life.

Duell, Sloan & Pearce's American edition of Louis Aragon's "The Century Was Young" will be published before the original edition in France. The book is scheduled for October 30.

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JOURNEY THROUGH YUGOSLAVIA

(*Continued from page 5*)

cent of the country's population, yet they did not interest her. She evidently had little contact with them and mentions them only in passing. Miss West would have us believe that all Serbs are poets and soldiers, while all Croats are lawyers. She discusses the Serbo-Croatian differences page upon page; but it never occurs to her that these differences were mostly the intellectual-political froth on the surface, that deep-down the Croatian and Serbian peasant masses always had a great deal in common. She lacks all sense of the masses of people. She likes leaders, identifies herself with them. Indeed, for her own inner reasons, she identifies herself with the murdered Alexander, takes on something he never had but is inherent in his country, and endows him with her own high personal qualities.

From my angle at this time, the book's most serious fault is the mass of misinformation about the political processes, personalities, and events in Serbia and in Yugoslavia since 1910. It is organized with great writing skill about the figure of Miss West's hero, Alexander. Not that she meant to misinform us, of course; she is palpably too grand a person for anything like that; it is just that her initial desperately romantic conception of him, inspired by the awful film when she was not quite herself, prepared her for the leg-pullers in the Belgrade government press bureau to whom the Yugoslav minister in London sent her, and whose job it was to feed her the official version of the story of the Belgrade dictatorship, and to make her believe that everyone who did not accept that version was a Communist. To deal fully with all of Miss West's misstatements pertaining to the dictatorship begun by Alexander would require a good-sized book. Some of them were answered years before she put them into her volumes. But it is unfortunate that she accepted the official Belgrade version. Its reappearance in "Black Lamb and Grey Falcon" is apt to serve the dictatorially inclined Pan-Serbian politicos in the as yet uncrystallized Yugoslav government-in-exile in London and in the United States who are reactionary left-overs of the Alexandrian period, and it is likely to make things more difficult for the Serbian, Coatian, and Slovenian democrats and federalists in that government-in-exile.

Her title will puzzle readers even after they finish the book. The grey falcon is a bird—*titsa siva*—in Serbian mythology; it brings a message to Czar Lazar on Kossovo Field just before the famous battle which resulted in the Serbian defeat by the Turks five hundred years ago. The black lamb is the little animal Miss West saw a primitive old peasant sacrifice on a rock at Kossovo. And these two creatures became tangled in her imagination into a symbol of, to her, mystical significance.

The best part of the book is the long Epilogue. There Miss West ruthlessly examines herself in the light of her exhilarating Yugoslav experience, and makes clear that the chief purpose and result of her six-year labor was to air her personal problem, which—because her consciousness extended beyond her backyard—touched on large English and international matters. She digs into England and the Western civilization of which she is a part by virtue of her background up to the late 1930's, and decides that hereafter Yugoslavia is her spiritual homeland. She looks at Hitler and Mussolini, at Munich and Neville Chamberlain, at World War II. In the summer of 1940 she finds herself on England's own Kossovo Field, praying, "Let me behave like a Serb."

Finally, her sound instinct sweeps over most of the political misinformation of the preceding chapters, and she writes a fairly accurate story of the revolutionary *coup* in Yogoslavia on March 27, 1941, without realizing, however, that in part that revolution was against the whole blundering, evil, bloody misgovernment of Yugoslavia which Alexander had begun in the late 1920's. She points out that the South Slavic peoples—notably the Serbs—decided to die as a state and as individuals under the blow of the Nazi power, which is essentially identical with the Turkish power of five hundred years ago, because they, above all other peoples, desire to live; because they have convictions about life that reach beyond mere sovereignty of their country and beyond personal existence.

The Epilogue should be widely and carefully read in the United States these days. Parts of it are a sharp, powerful cry against defeatism, lack of conviction, reluctance to sacrifice, and fear of death.

A curious book. Somewhere in it is a discussion of bad good men and good bad men which might apply to books. One could argue that Miss West's is both—a bad good book and a good bad one.

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Impact of the Bombs

THE OAKEN HEART. By Margery Allingham. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1941. 305 *pp.* $3.

OUT OF THE PEOPLE. By J. B. Priestley. New York: Harper & Bros. 1941. 160 *pp.* $1.50.

Reviewed by KLAUS LAMBRECHT

THESE two books, though vastly different in scope and outlook, manner and presentation, have much in common. They both deal with the people of war-time Britain trying to analyze their reflections and reactions; and both confirm what we have already been able to gather even from less pertinent accounts—that under the fire of German bombs something has happened to the English people, something that might well lead to a revolution of the British form of life. From both books, however, it becomes quite clear that this revolution, if it comes, will have nothing to do with Marxism or Socialism in a strict sense. It will be, as Mr. Priestley points out, a revolution of people who have learned (the hard way, to be sure) to consider themselves as "the people" and who have discovered that public affairs are indeed a matter of their concern, and intend to act accordingly.

One can hardly think of a better illustration of Mr. Priestley's theories than Miss Allingham's book. She writes about war-time life in an English village called Auburn, and though much of it is already known to us, the book gives a clear and concrete picture of what with most Americans so far has been a rather vague idea. There is much warmth in her descriptions and portrayals of the little people whose daily worries and anxieties she has shared and a remarkable insight in her observations of the change the war has brought about in them. This change, as the related incidents quite clearly indicate, bears in itself no revolutionary factors; it is merely a discarding of the old indifference and complacency, a rather belated awakening of consciousness, a realization of failure, and the fundamental desire to make good. But it is also an awakening to a new sort of scepticism toward everything the Government says and does, a sound disbelief in some of the established institutions and traditions, a slight discontent with the way of life they are supposed to be fighting for. This, combined with the desire to make good, leads the people of Auburn, for example, to take certain matters of civil defense in their own hands. "In time," writes Miss Allingham, "common sense triumphed, or at least it came in sight of triumphing before the end of history."

If Auburn is a symbol, and its people, as Miss Allingham infers, are characteristic for the English people at large, then Mr. Priestley's views lose most of their theoretical aspects and come very close to reality. His whole analysis, as well as his outline for a future world, is based on this democratic conception of "the people" as opposed to the totalitarian conception of "the masses." Although one may often disagree with his reasoning and even argue that some far-reaching considerations have been carefully left out, one cannot deny that Mr. Priestley knows more about the shifting atmosphere of Britain, the temperament, and the changing attitude of its people than most of the official propagandists. His keen perception of their reactions has made him their foremost spokesman, and as one may safely assume that he represents a group which may easily become a majority, his book should be recommended as an important contribution toward the future organization of the post-war world.

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WHITTLESEY HOUSE • New York

Newhouse's World

ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN. By Edward Newhouse. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1941. 286 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THIS is a volume of short stories, some of which have appeared in the *New Yorker* and the *New Republic,* held together by the fiction that their chief characters were all members of a graduating class of 1929 in a New York High School; a major actor in one story will appear in a minor role in another, and sometimes the same figure will appear as the protagonist of several stories. Before each chapter there is a paragraph about the hero as he appeared in his school days, designed to throw some light, illuminating or ironical, upon his later development: the boy who sailed close to the wind of cheating is now a highly successful advertising man, with his pick of ladies to love and leave; the boy who made the crack about "What's a Grecian urn?—Fifteen a week if he don't own the restaurant" is now himself running the pinball machine in a cheap Greek corner hangout; the boy who defended Sacco and Vanzetti is riding the rods. Sometimes these paragraphs have little bearing on the stories that follow, and one begins to call the scheme forced; but by the end of the book one realizes that these boys all do hang together as clearly as the Old Nostalgian types in Mr. Harvey Smith's "The Gang's All Here"; these are the sharp-witted, rootless types produced by the competition of a lower-middle-class New York neighborhood.

Mr. Newhouse knows his world, and has made it his own. It has its own harsh flavor, sometimes pungent, sometimes bitter, but never flat on the tongue. It is a world where nobody is both agreeable and successful, and few are either one. Well, that, one feels, is the way the world looks to an author who has keen observation, great skill, and transparent honesty; he can compel us to feel either contempt or pity, or sardonic amusement, or even, sometimes, admiration, without ever seeming to ask for any of those emotions, or even to arrange his story so as to demand them. His closest resemblances are to Mr. Irwin Shaw and Mr. Jerome Weidman, but he stands on his own feet, and he need not fear the comparison with either of them. If he does not carry technical achievement to such a pitch of virtuosity, his vision is broader and clearer. His world is a small one and a bitter one, but it is complete, and fundamentally honest, and he possesses it entirely.

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Daly . . .

THE STREET HAS CHANGED. By Elizabeth Daly. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1941. 302 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by FRANCES SMYTH

AS the author of a half-dozen successful mystery stories Elizabeth Daly knows how to manipulate a group of characters and how to weave together the separate threads of a plot so that no ends are left dangling. In "The Street Has Changed" she has abandoned the mystery field for a study of four New York families whose lives are inextricably tied together by a passion for the theatre. By no means all the members of all the families who inhabit the brownstones just off Fifth Avenue are responsive to the pull, but at least one person in each household in each generation—and Miss Daly covers three—risks domestic conflict and financial ruin in order to have some share in the excitement of the stage. It begins with Miss Fay Beacham, rebelling against her life as a *jeune fille bien élèvée,* and bullying George Dominick, the famous manager, into taking her to London with his company. It ends, fifty years later, in 1941, with Fay emerging as the anonymous "angel" who is putting up twenty-five thousand dollars to back the first production of George Dominick's grandson. In the interval, the street has changed: brownstones have given way to small flats that have in turn yielded to great apartment houses, but, Miss Daly intends to suggest, the hold the theatre exerts has not changed at all; its strength, in fact, increases yearly.

Miss Daly's thesis may very well be true. However, neatly contrived and fitted as her novel is, she remarkably fails to communicate to the reader any of the glow and glamor to which her characters are evidently in thrall. Consequently, it is difficult for the reader, himself so untouched by the reported magic, to accept its announced dominion over the lives of the people in the book. This fact tends to thwart any very lively interest in Miss Daly's novel.

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

INSANE PEOPLE IN LITERATURE

A not inconsiderable portion of Bookland's population consists of those who are afflicted with various types of insanity. Do you remember those who are briefly described below? Allowing 5 points for each one whose name you can recall, and another 5 if you remember the author who created him, a score of 60 is par, 70 is good, 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 39.

1. Spurned by a prince who was feigning madness, she went insane and drowned herself.

2. A victim of hereditary insanity and drunkenness, confined to the third floor of her husband's country house, she escaped one night, set fire to the place, and then jumped from the roof to her death.

3. From reading too many books on knight-errantry, this old gentleman lost his wits, and, sallying forth in a suit of old armor to look for adventures, he attacked a bunch of windmills under the delusion that they were enchanted giants.

4. The head of King Charles I was always getting into the Memorial this gentleman was writing, so he used the manuscript sheets for kite paper.

5. Her husband was able to restrain her when she was about to relapse by uttering a word that teemed with hidden meaning—"Basingstoke."

6. This epileptic Russian prince, who was called an idiot because of his gentle and child-like character, really went insane when his bride-to-be left him on their wedding day and went to a former lover, who first married her and then murdered her.

7. After her lover had indirectly caused the death of her mother, killed her brother, and then left town, she went mad and drowned their infant child.

8. A fall from the scaffolding made a homicidal maniac out of this dyke worker until a brain operation ten years later restored his memory.

9. He fell in love with his cousin's teeth, and on the night that she was buried he dug her up and extracted them.

10. Under the delusion that eating living things was necessary to sustain his own life, this patient in a lunatic asylum first ate flies, then spiders, and finally sparrows.

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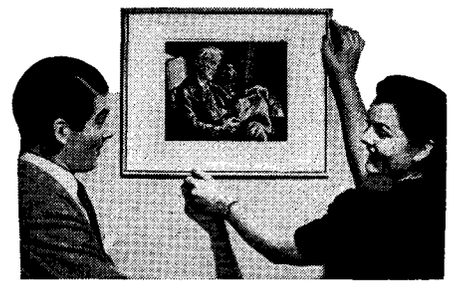

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From Whodunits to Poetry

FOSTER KENNEDY

IT is a mistake to regard detective literature as an ignoble form of entertainment and escape. It must not be confused with the horror tale or with the story of adventure. For unlike them, the detective story must be tightly knit, not a strand missing. Far from being a tale of action, it is a thought—intellectual challenge to work on a plane utterly different from that usually lived by the reader. It is a battle of brains, the author versus the reader, a gamble in which the reader plays his hunch, or his thought, or what he thinks is his thought, and the author is the Bank operating the edge.

Some of its charm, too, lies in one's knowledge that it must end—and that a finish, valid and well-patterned, however surprising, will be reached. This removes it from the domain of ordinary living and from the ordinary novel, in which there are gaps, and starts and stops, and a continuity without conclusion.

The archaic, primitive, true detective tale is a geometric form; the characters must lack character; the scene must be sufficiently familiar as not to intrude, or give rise to thought on its own behalf. Love interest must not confuse the reader's severely intellectual struggle; and humor is negligible. The plot is all, the clues must be intellectually honorable and not just red herrings. This is the lonely man's chess game. Many others who want surcease from their environment take to drink or movies or cocaine, but the devotee of the detective story is an austere intellectual, living a difficult but ascetic life.

The detective tale is modern but it is getting into old age, and why? It depends on plot, and plots have a way of running out. Its archaic severity is already passing, and occasionally one now finds a pretty woman blurring the scene, or the characters wisecracking instead of keeping to their job of exposition or bewilderment. This, of course, is sheer weakness of intellect in the author, and soon, if this goes on, he will dwindle into a pulp-artisan or even a novelist.

The man or woman with the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin—maybe in bed reading detective stories in Braille during a blackout—will have to be up and about the world's business; and even the excitement of the story will cease to compete with current events. So perhaps we'll find another and older escape, that of poetry and humorous fantasy. Part of the value of great poetry is in its ability to embrace many of the elements of the truly great detective story. Poetry must be closely knit together, each word and phrase must have its perfect value to its fellows, it exacts utter attention for understanding, it has woven a precise pattern out of the unknown, and it reaches a finish. A precise discipline is needed for its enjoyment; only people who never read poetry ever speak of "glancing through" or "skimming over" a new poem.

Poetry, of course, is not a specialized technique like the detective story, so it can be always making new compounds out of old elements, always giving us new lamps for old. It is an immortal form which will always be at the behest of men educated to its service, who have become distraught with life. It overcomes its humbler rival, too, in its power to light up all the emotions; the detective story only excites the upper reaches of the intellect and can never bear re-reading. To survive, the detective story must seek new instruments, find in new phenomena new mysteries and new puzzles; but, beware; it's rules are immutable. If its authors stoop to frighten us, to horrify, to sicken, to joke, to make us laugh, to let us dally with love and with the tangles of Naeara's hair, then they are infanticides, and should suffer the penalties of those who slay their noble, intellectual, ascetic, and utterly virtuous child.

SECRET ADVENTURES

(*Continued from page 7*)

dissent in detail from his estimate of the individual novels of Dorothy Sayers, but he restores one of her best and most neglected stories—"The Documents in the Case," written in collaboration with Robert Eustace—to its high place on the shelf. He does double-edged justice to S. S. Van Dine and Agatha Christie. He appreciates the subtleties of Anthony Berkeley, to whom the otherwise discerning Alexander Woollcott, in identifying him as half of the writing team known as Francis Iles, once referred as a "hack writer." (Mr. Haycraft seems to think Anthony Berkeley is Francis Iles all by himself, without collaboration.) He discerns the insufficiently appreciated qualities of Margery Allingham.

Altogether, Mr. Haycraft has written a penetrating, well-informed book, a book which is rare in that it is both immensely readable and invaluable for reference. A remarkable book altogether. And yet, even another addict cannot help feeling that one of the most remarkable things about it is the enormous number of detective stories Mr. Haycraft has managed to read and still keep his passion for them. The law of diminishing returns sooner or later affects one's enjoyment of detective fiction.

There are two reasons. The first is that, except for the stories and novels of the really gifted writers, detective fiction is too much all of a piece. One novel is too much like another, in plotting, characterization, style, and devices. This is true in spite of varieties within the species, because there is overproduction in each of the varieties.

This overproduction is nobody's fault, neither publishers' nor authors'. It is not that there are too many bad detective novels published (there are, but that is beside the point), but that there are too many pretty good ones. It is impossible to eliminate this condition without eliminating ninety per cent of the mysteries that are published. It is, in fact, too easy to write a pretty good mystery.

In saying this I take issue with Mr. Haycraft, who thinks far otherwise. He denies heatedly that "the execution of the detective story is child's play, something that may be accomplished almost at will by any one who wishes to take the required time."

Nothing [he continues] could be more distant from the truth—as hun-

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dreds of would-be writers have learned to their sorrow. If all the trained men and women of letters, even, who have failed in casual attempts to dash off police novels in odd and pot-boiling moments could be laid end to end, they would extend approximately from Great Russell Street to Fourth Avenue.

Elsewhere, however, Mr. Haycraft accepts the figure of three hundred as the annual output of crime novels. This is a larger number than any other special category of fiction reaches. If this does not mean that it is easier to write a publishable detective novel than a publishable historical novel or psychological novel or even love story, what does it mean? Actually, there may be no fundamental difference of view between Mr. Haycraft and myself. He is saying that it is much more difficult to write a good detective novel than a bad one. Of that there is no manner of doubt; but it is still true that it is easier to write at least a pretty good detective novel than other publishable fiction. This accounts for overproduction and the law of diminishing returns.

Now for the second reason, which has to do with the really talented writers, the top-notchers. There are exceptions, but by and large it is true that the writers who succeed better than the average are those who develop interesting detectives. This is quite natural. Any first novel in this overcrowded field, even if its quality is far above the average, wins recognition with difficulty; the author's best road to success is to provide continuity of interest from one book to the next by means of a central character who becomes that author's trademark, and indeed, if sufficiently successful, more widely known by name than the author himself. Thus it is that the writers who have risen to the top are, with a few exceptions, identified with their detectives.

Now the detectives of fiction so frequently follow the same course that it can almost be plotted on a chart. At first, a Philo Vance or an Hercule Poirot or a Lord Peter Wimsey is fresh, interesting, challenging. Their eccentricities, in the best examples, are not mere ornamentation but part of the plot. Each has special abilities of his own and special insights distinguishing him not only from the other characters in his own author's novels, but also from the other detectives in other authors' novels. He first develops these unique qualities, then exploits them, and sooner or later, if he goes through a long enough succession of books, he almost inevitably turns into a caricature of himself.

THIS has not happened to every detective. It did not happen to Mr. Holmes, who occasionally skirted the danger but always pulled out in time. It did not happen to Dr. Thorndyke: but Dr. Thorndyke did not develop; the Thorndyke novels suffer, as Mr. Haycraft points out, from using the same plot too often, so that they become almost interchangeable. But it did happen to Vance, it has happened to Wimsey, who may pull out of it, and there are signs that it is happening to Nero Wolfe.

Death by self-travesty is the most common occupational disease of the detectives of fiction, but it is not the only one. Others than Dr. Thorndyke have languished under monotony of plot, and Dr. Thorndyke is indeed one of the few of this class to have survived. Every author, even—possibly particularly—the top-notchers, tends to repeat himself, unconsciously, but in vital respects. Anthony Berkeley has always had a tendency to make the Watson turn out to be the murderer. Agatha Christie, as Mr. Haycraft points out, has overplayed the least-likely-person solution. Dorothy Sayers often tips her hand too soon, leaving only the question How after Who has been answered.

A third disaster that frequently overtakes successful mystery writers is that when they become big names, they become interesting to the serial market. As Mr. Haycraft shows, editors of magazines want quite different qualities in mystery fiction from those which appeal to the connoisseur: usually qualities which are anathema to the connoisseur, romance or adventure or both. How the big name goes after big money and ceases to write interestingly is revealed in one of the most penetrating sections of Mr. Haycraft's book.

When any of these melancholy conditions overtakes your favorite detective, the only thing to do is go back and reread his early adventures. The Sherlock Holmes stories are not the only ones which can stand up for a second or third go. I happen to have the fortunate faculty of forgetting the plots of my favorite mysteries after a few years, and more often than not,

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 394)

EPSTEIN:
LET THERE BE SCULPTURE

Consummatum Est—It is finished. Instead of writing about it, instead of the people standing about talking, arguing, disputing over the prone Son of Man with protesting palms upturned, there should be music, the solemn mass of Bach.

MEET this young pair

Whose perilous mission
Is the theme of the novel
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AND NOW MEET this diplomat (Oxford-bred)

He asks them to find
If a man is dead . . .

A man on whose life
A web is spun
Of intricate plotting
That baffles the Hun

Since they know no codes
Nor code unravellers
They *may* slip through
As innocent travellers . . .

Paris, Nürnberg
Munich in Bavaria—
Their "vacation" trip
Gets scarier and scarier

Until—
But under no condition
Will we tell the plot of—

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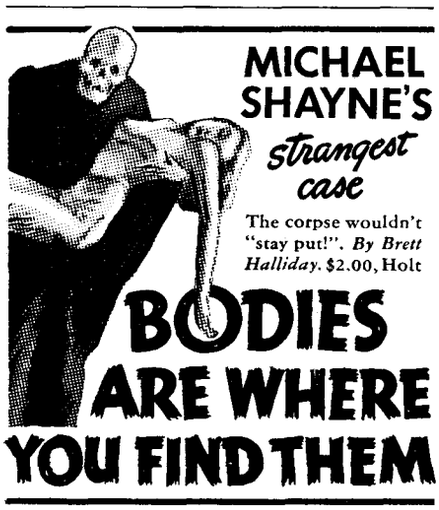
if I space the intervals sufficiently, I can reread an early Dorothy Sayers or an early S. S. Van Dine almost as if I had never read it before. But even when I do remember who the murderer turns out to be, I can reread a first-rate detective novel with unspoiled pleasure.

The top-notch mystery writers in their prime give you fiction in its purest form: story-telling for its own sake, characterization in terms of action and dialogue, as conventional in emotional values as an eighteenth-century portrait but frequently comparable in subtlety, all set in a world of the imagination which exists for itself and not for its symbolical or ethical significance. If the absence of such significance means that detective fiction can never reach the level of serious fiction which is a "criticism of life," it also means that the best detective fiction seldom or never is marred by the false emotion or the dubious values which attach, if only in a left-handed way, to popular fiction in certain other categories.

It is in the rereadability of a detective novel that its chances for survival inhere. And for rereadability there must be more than an ingenious plot, more than a unique murder device. There have to be characters—whose society one enjoys with no feeling of obligation or responsibility—existing in a magnetic atmosphere. These qualities are prominent in even the weakest of the Conan Doyle stories; and only to a smaller degree than in Conan Doyle are they present in the best work of all the first-rank writers of detective fiction. This being the case, one feels confidence that the future of the detective story—allowing for the changes in fashion which Mr. Haycraft so discerningly traces—is going to be very much like the past.

George Stevens, former editor of The Saturday Review of Literature, *now an editor of the J. B. Lippincott Company, is in charge of the New York office of the publishing firm.*



The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
EVIL UNDER THE SUN *Agatha Christie* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Poirot, reposing himself at English seaside resort, assembles pieces of murder mosaic involving strangled charmer who liked men too well.	Worked out with characteristic Christie cunning and subtle deception. Poirot scintillates, but crime itself may take a heap of believing.	"Very slick"
FAMILY AFFAIR *Ione Sandberg Shriber* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.)	Ailing Empire State plutocrat pushed through death's door by parties unknown. Lieut. Grady, harassed by numerous suspects, struggles bravely.	Reason for two murders rather paradoxical but people are ably drawn, sleuthing logical, and suspense runs high throughout.	Acceptable
DR. TOBY FINDS MURDER *Sturges M. Schley* (Random House: $2.)	Mysterious wounding of gigantic friend sends Dr. Toby hotfoot to Fla., where murders in tragic family engage in expert attention.	Drug addicts, diabetics, glossy mobsters and other highly colored folks enliven feverish and lushly-scened opus that doesn't quite come off.	Average
IF THE SHROUD FITS *Kelley Roos* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Carving knife finishes society millionairess posing for silverware ad. Niece also killed. Breezy amateur and bride assist befogged Manhattan cops.	Super-ebullience of animal spirits amongst all concerned, and two quite unbelievable professional sleuths make otherwise reasonably interesting yarn.	Irritating
SMALL TOWN MURDER *Beatrice Jefferson* (Dutton: $2.)	Southern doctor shot, and wife, suspected of crime, dies under suspicious circumstances. Woman friend of stricken family finally ensnares double killer.	Forthright, pleasantly written, and ably characterized small town tragedy—trifle short on "mystery" side but full of "local color" and interest.	Passes muster
THE NAVY COLT *Frank Gruber* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.)	Misplaced gallantry of Johnny Fletcher and Sam Cragg starts cavalcade of crime that whirls around Chicago at blizzard speed.	Certainly the most amusing, if not best-plotted, adventure of this wacky pair. Finish slightly confused but action never lets up.	Exhilarating
SUITABLE FOR FRAMING *Marion Holbrook* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Traffic in trade secrets and other office wickedness lead to double murder in Manhattan advt.-agency. Perceptive gal sleuths perilously.	Moves briskly, with intrigue, gaiety and thrills to pretty well-concealed pay-off. Writing agreeable and business background veracious.	Pleasant
THE McNEILLS CHASE A GHOST *Theodora DuBois* (Houghton Mifflin Co.: $2.)	Detective-minded doctor and wife uncover cunningly concealed trail of phony theme-writer who fatally stabbed suspicious Mass. undergraduate.	Best McNeill story to date. Faculty, student, and bookish backgrounds, excellently done; there's action, humor and good sleuthing, too.	Full marks
DEATH VISITS DOWNSPRING *Miles Burton* (Crime Club: $2.)	Fatal coshing of English butler and anomalous visitor to much-bombed hamlet present Desmond Merrion and Insp. Arnold with tough problem.	Graphic and effective pictures of raids and dog fights over English countryside. Good central puzzle, and plentiful action.	Commendable
NEVER COME BACK *John Mair* (Little, Brown: $2.50)	Slaying of mysterious lady-love immerses a moral young Britisher in sea of intrigue and violence. He swims out cleverly.	Cold-blooded chronicle of murder, 5th col. stuff, and generally unvarnished wickedness. Bulging with hateful people brilliantly portrayed.	B-r-r-r!

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PREACHING AND HUMOR

(*Continued from page* 16)

have been a first-rate character, giving his monarch good advice in bad puns.

In the British Empire of our time, satirical humor of the Gilbert and Sullivan sort enjoys a solid position in the realm, and *Punch,* which is as British as vegetable marrow, is socially acceptable everywhere an Englishman is to be found. The *Punch* editors not only write the jokes but they help make the laws of England. Here in America we have an immensely humorous people in a land of milk and honey and wit, who cherish the ideal of the "sense" of humor and at the same time are highly suspicious of anything which is nonserious. Whatever else an American believes or disbelieves about himself, he is absolutely sure he has a sense of humor.

FRANK MOORE COLBY, one of the most intelligent humorists operating in this country in the early years of this century, in an essay called "The Pursuit of Humor" described how the American loves and guards his most precious treasure:

" . . . Now it is the commonest thing in the world to hear people call the absence of a sense of humor the one fatal defect. No matter how owlish a man is, he will tell you that. It is a miserable falsehood, and it does incalculable harm. A life without humor is like a life without legs. You are haunted by a sense of incompleteness, and you cannot go where your friends go. You are also somewhat of a burden.

"But the only really fatal thing is the shamming of humor when you have it not. There are people whom nature meant to be solemn from their cradle to their grave. They are under bonds to remain so. In so far as they are true to themselves they are safe company for any one; but outside their proper field they are terrible. Solemnity is relatively a blessing, and the man who was born with it should never be encouraged to wrench himself away."

Relatively few American humorists have become really famous, so that their name is known to everyone in the land in the way that many novelists and other solemn literary characters have become famous. Mark Twain made it. He had, of course, an auspicious start, since he was essentially a story teller and his humor was an added attraction. (It was also very, very good.) In this century Ring Lardner is the idol of professional humorists and of plenty of other people, too; but I think I am correct in saying that at the height of his career he was not one of the most widely known literary figures in this country, and the name Lardner was not known to the millions but only to the thousands. Even today he has not reached Mr. and Mrs. America and all the clippers at sea, to the extent that Mark Twain reached them, and I doubt if he ever will. On the whole, the humorists who contribute pleasure to a wide audience are the ones who create characters and tell tales, the ones who are story tellers at heart. The general public needs something to get a grip on—a Penrod, a Huck Finn, a Brer Rabbit, or a Father Day. The subtleties of satire and burlesque and nonsense and parody and criticism are no dish for the masses; they are only for the top (or, if you want, for the bottom) layer of intellect. Clarence Day, for example, was relatively inconspicuous when he was oozing his incomparable "Thoughts without Words," which are his best creations; he became generally known and generally loved only after he had brought Father to life.

I was interested, in reading DeVoto's "Mark Twain in Eruption," to come across some caustic remarks of Mr. Clemens's about an anthology of humor which his copyright lawyer had sent him and which Mark described as "a great fat, coarse, offensive volume." He was not amused. "This book is a cemetery," he wrote.

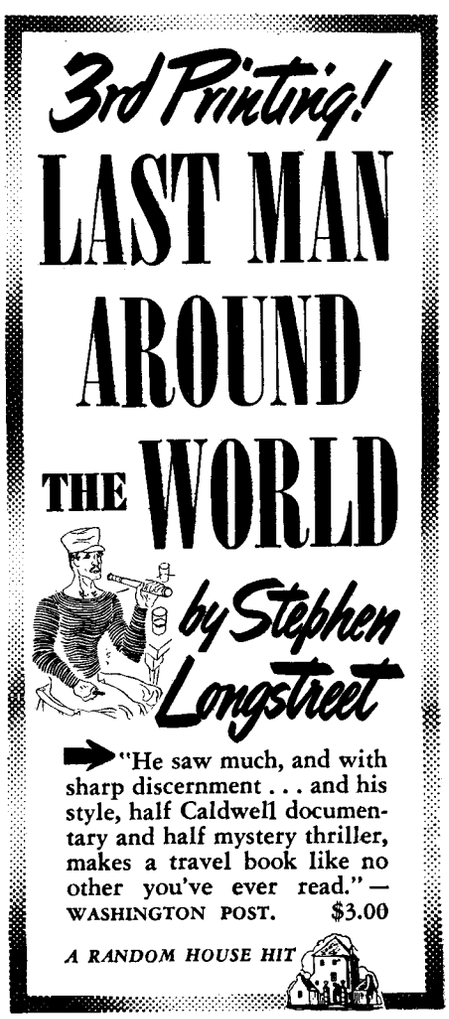
"In this mortuary volume I find Nasby, Artemus Ward, Yawcob Strauss, Derby, Burdette, Eli Perkins, the *Danbury News* Man, Orpheus C. Kerr, Smith O'Brien, Josh Billings, and a score of others, maybe two score, whose writings and sayings were once in everybody's mouth but are now heard of no more and are no longer mentioned.

"Seventy-eight seems an incredible crop of well-known humorists for one forty-year period to have produced, and yet this book has not harvested the entire crop—far from it. It has no mention of Ike Partington, once so welcome and so well known; it has no mention of Doesticks, nor of the Pfaff crowd, nor of Artemus Ward's numerous and perishable imitators, nor of three very popular Southern humorists whose names I am not able to recall, nor of a dozen other sparkling transients whose light shone for a time but has now, years ago, gone out.

"Why have they perished? Because they were merely humorists. Humorists of the 'mere' sort cannot survive. Humor is only a fragrance, a decoration. Often it is merely an odd trick of speech and of spelling, as in the case of Ward and Billings and Nasby and the 'Disbanded Volunteer,' and presently the fashion passes and the fame along with it. There are those who say a novel should be a work of art solely, and you must not preach in it, you must not teach in it. That may be true as regards novels but it is not true as regards humor. Humor must not professedly teach, and it must not professedly preach, but it must do both if it would live forever. By forever, I mean thirty years. With all its preaching it is not likely to outlive so long a term as that." The very things it preaches about, and which are novelties when it preaches about them, can cease to be novelties and become commonplaces in thirty years. Then that sermon can thenceforth interest no one.

Well, I didn't intend to get off onto the broad subject of humor, or even to let Mark Twain get off onto it. I don't think I agree that humor must preach in order to live; it need only speak the truth—and I notice it always does.

This article is a preview of the Introduction to "A Subtreasury of American Humor," edited by E. B. White and Katharine S. White, to be published shortly by Coward-McCann.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THE IMMUNITY COMPLEX IN AMERICA

(*Continued from page 4*)

unique solutions which might be devised.

There is nothing pernicious or unnatural about this. Movies are a highly proficient form of amusement and entertainment and are supposed to offer a pleasant hour or two of recreation and relaxation—which they do—from a world that has its full quota of perplexities and complexities. But over and above all this is a general approach to problems—or we might even call it a philosophy—which is indigenously American in its application and outcome. America did not invent the happy ending—even the Egyptian fables ended on a note of moral uplift; nor are we the only people who like to see happiness triumph over misery, and sunshine over the dark. But what is peculiarly American is the way the automatic happy ending has been exploited, the way it has become part of the public consciousness where it affects everyday attitudes and, more seriously, a not inconsiderable extent of our thinking about national and world problems.

Perhaps all this is only natural considering that America is and has been the most successful nation in the world. And the truth of the matter is that thus far the "we'll-blunder-through-somehow" approach *has* worked—worked so well, in fact, that the surprise is not that we continue to rely on it as heavily as we do but that, considering its infallibility, we do not rely on it more. This facility of backing into solutions, combined with a generous share of good luck, has virtually become a national tradition.

And yet the legend of invulnerability and invincibility, built up out of our triumphant past and taken up and exalted so proudly in a considerable part of our literature and our histories, is insufficient in itself to perpetuate the national welfare. Nor is it a substitute for critical thinking, for which no effective substitute has ever been devised. We have been successful as a nation in the past, but that is no guarantee that we will be similarly successful in the future. If our objective is to keep America free, we shall have to do more than depend upon a legend to do all the work for us. This is an uncomfortable world for legends right now, especially those which seem to promise security to a much larger extent than circumstances might warrant.

This does not mean that we should recognize and accept disaster as inevitable; it means that if we are to avoid disaster we shall have to face day-by-day events on the basis of their requirements and their threats, and not ignore realities because we think we feel it in our bones that nothing can hurt us or even touch us. No; we are not above disaster any more than France was above disaster, or Norway or Belgium or Holland or Denmark. If the storm is coming this way, as it seems to be, it will be difficult to wish it away. While we can—and should—hope for the best, we must be prepared to face and turn back the worst.

Thus, one of the biggest jobs before America is to make real and intelligible not only the nature of the danger but the bare fact that the danger actually exists. The biggest bottleneck in national defense is a state of mind which cannot comprehend a threat to our national existence because, in the language of the semanticists, there is no direct or pertinent experience by which that threat can be given concrete meaning or substance. This is something deeper than over-confidence;

"I'm going to call you darling!"

The Bandit told this to the Nun with a fierce hunger in his voice. She was like no one he had ever met before. A low, beastly fellow, his moods were as strange as those of Australia itself—that vast continent of sagebrush, wandering native tribesmen, burning sun and black cold nights.

—And that other woman, Sorrel, looked more like a wild child than a grown woman. Her eyes followed the Bandit, quick to observe each mood—she was his willing slave.

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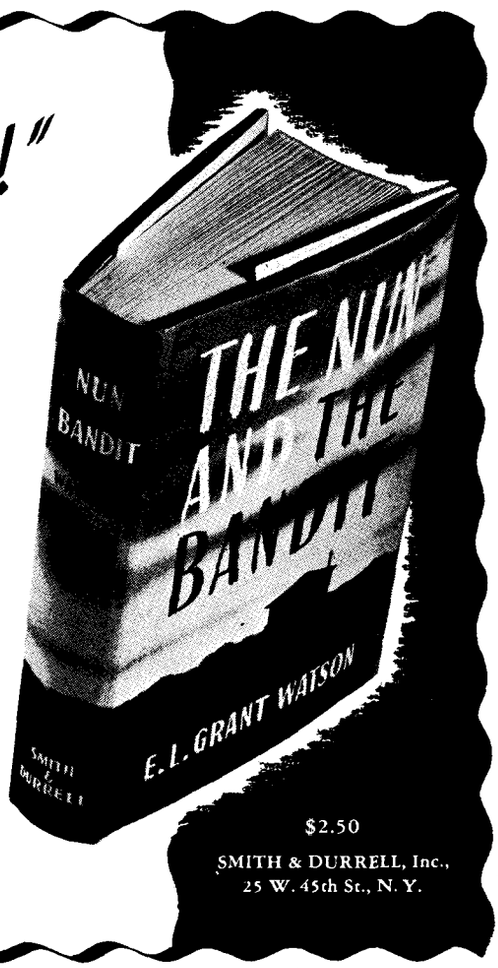
THE NUN AND THE BANDIT By E.L.Grant Watson



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it has the element of confidence in it, to be sure; but there are also other and more important elements—a quasi-mystical and almost-innate belief that no harm can come to us—that when things become blackest ("it is darkest just before dawn")—and perhaps not until then—something will turn up, suddenly, and the crisis will solve itself, all the loose pieces mysteriously falling together into proper place.

This sounds like a simple description of faith—or of a religious conviction that justice and the good will triumph in the end—but here, too, this is only part of the picture. Other peoples have faith and religion without necessarily possessing such a feeling of immunity from danger. In the final analysis, then, this attitude or psychology or state of mind—whatever it is called—is a combination of many factors whose least common denominator is the national tradition of invulnerability. It might be imagined that the millions who came here from foreign lands—lands which time and again tasted the sharp lash of defeat and disaster—might instinctively react the same way against danger here. But this is not necessarily true. The vision of America that brought many of them here was a place of assured safety, a nation out of reach of peril, a country of Destiny. Thus the psychology of immunity is native to no single group; it transcends ancestry, class lines, party lines, and all other ascertainable lines of demarcation.

Theoretically, such a psychology ought to be of great value, since, according to the general maxim, a people who are confident that they won't be beat can't be beat. Practically, the theory works only when the people are in a position to avoid being beat. If the immunity complex results in an unwillingness or an inability to recognize and evaluate danger, it becomes no less a danger in itself.

Automatic solutions are possible—of course; but we should not count on them. If a solution is found at all to the problems of America's future and the future of civilization—and the two are mutually dependent—it is likely that it will be found only after considerable effort and thought. And even if no perfect solution exists, and we find that only a choice of evils exists, then the search for the least evil will have to be made. Only in that way can we save for ourselves the chance to move ultimately towards positive goals.

All this is not to cast any doubt on the belief that justice and the good always triumph in the End. It is only by way of reminding us that we live in the Meanwhile.

This article forms a chapter in "The Good Inheritance," to be published by Coward-McCann.

"Going Hollywood"

A LADY GOES TO HOLLYWOOD. By Helen Partridge. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1941. 259 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by HENRY B. KRANZ

WHEN Bellamy Partridge's "Country Lawyer" became a best-seller and was bought for film production the author went to Hollywood to work on the script. Helen Partridge accompanied her husband and during her six months' stay wrote many letters to friends in the East. Returning to her Connecticut farm house she discovered that one of her friends had collected and arranged her letters to make a book.

Mrs. Partridge began very early to discover the fascination of Hollywood (for people who are rich) and to love it. In one of her first letters she strongly defends the people who work there. "In general I have never seen a community of fiercer-working, harder-trying, more health-concerned people. There is less drinking here than any place I have ever been, excepting perhaps Lake Leone." But later she writes: "In fact everything they do is more or less a game. They remind me of a lot of little boys playing at big business."

Since Mrs. Partridge saw the studios only once during her visit she cannot tell much about more intimate aspects of Hollywood film life. She gives, however, a brisk and gay record of small daily events in her life and in the life of a movie writer who is happy to receive every week a fat check.

We see her admiring the $14-a-day apartment in the Beverly Hills Hotel, especially the bathroom with "objets de luxe, the canary-colored linoleum-covered walls, the dozen thick yellow bath towels, the yellow face tissue in a holder, everything wrapped in cellophane with little touches of silver and gold." Later she moved into the less expensive Chateau Beaumont. "So here we are in this A tower with an A view and A rent and we now also rate A." She went to Magnin and spent a whole day in the fitting room. "Well, isn't it cute and isn't it fun? I keep pinching me."

Mrs. Partridge did not want to "go Hollywood" but she couldn't resist. The result is an amusing book. "A Lady Goes to Hollywood" is not a sparkling satire on life in the film metropolis and is therefore likely to be much quoted in Hollywood by people who did not like "What Makes Sammy Run?" It is a kind of personal record illuminated by many anecdotes and some shrewd bits of comment on various phases of Hollywood life. Often these comments are delightfully ironic or outright humorous. They even help sometimes the reader to understand better what he reads and hears about film stars, producers, movie writers, and their idle wives in Hollywood.

"A Lady Goes to Hollywood" does not tell the truth about Hollywood, it does not debunk the many fan magazines and tabloids. It entertains because it tells of a delightful visit to the capital of Filmland, because Helen Partridge writes good prose, and because her book is on the whole quite gay. It is entertainment.

ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Ophelia, in "Hamlet," by William Shakespeare.
2. Bertha Rochester, in "Jane Eyre," by Charlotte Bronte.
3. "Don Quixote," by Cervantes.
4. Mr. Dick, in "David Copperfield," by Dickens.
5. Mad Margaret, in "Ruddigore," by W. S. Gilbert.
6. Prince Myshkin, in "The Idiot," by Feodor Dostoievski.
7. Margaret, in "Faust," by Goethe.
8. Raff Brinker, in "Hans Brinker," by Mary Mapes Dodge.
9. Egaeus, in "Berenice," by Edgar Allan Poe.
10. Renfield, in "Dracula," by Bram Stoker.

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☞Books dealing with the facts of life and medical advice are generously treated. The most popular books on these subjects, apparently, seem to be "Sane Sex Life," "Married Love," and "The Rhythm of Sterility and Fertility in Women." While the choice of books dealing with health and sex are somewhat wider in the Montgomery Ward catalog, we note with a little surprise that they fail to feature or carry in stock "The Modern Method of Birth Control." Sears handles this in strong advertising fashion. Sex books are sold on a non-returnable basis. To make it easier for those interested in this fascinating subject, one may purchase any group of these titles amounting to $14.00, for as little as $2.00 down and $2.00 a week.

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☞Fiction comes in for a wide and choice selection. Zane Grey, Grace Livingston Hill, and Gene Stratton Porter seem to be the most popular choices of the fifty or sixty millions of readers who thumb these pages with unfailing regularity twice each year. Still the most popular titles for children are the books by Louisa May Alcott and the Nancy Drew Mysteries.

★ ★

☞Since these catalogs probably go to press three or four months before their appearance, and since we are browsing through the Fall and Winter issues of 1941-1942, we note that Sears features "Oliver Wiswell," "This Above All," and "Flotsam." Few books in the non-fiction group appear. The other catalog is a little more complete in current material, for it lists quite an imposing series of titles in the non-fiction field. Much space is given to "Out of the Night," while fiction is represented by "They Came to a River," and "Random Harvest." Prices are fully maintained according to those set by the publishers.

★ ★

☞We are properly impressed at the foresight and merchandising instinct of the cataloguer. All of the titles featured in the current group are still on many best seller lists, and this, we believe, speaks well for their ability to forecast sales and length of popularity of the titles. ☞Both of these catalogs go into minute detail in their description. This is especially evident in the description of technical books on aircraft maintenance, on automobile and electrical and radio work. Sales in this field are impressive and no doubt the result of the national defense program. Perhaps when the history of our armed forces is written, Montgomery Ward and Sears, Roebuck will be awarded their just honors for their contributions.

★ ★

The cultural and educational value of these books is considerable. They reach thousands of small villages and towns many miles removed from public libraries and bookstores. It would be an interesting and important study to calculate how many people depend upon the gentlemen from Chicago to provide them with reading material. To these many millions the beginnings of the Fall-Winter and Spring-Summer seasons mean days for mental stimulation and cheer.

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Records in Review

Edward Tatnall Canby

THE recording of Ferde Grofé's *Grand Canyon Suite* by André Kostelanetz (C M-463) brings to mind his recent recording of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue,* orchestrated by Grofé. The *Rhapsody* gave rise in 1924 to that doubtful but much argued classification, symphonic jazz, and the *Grand Canyon* for reasons beyond my understanding is supposed to be the same. There is only the remotest tinge of what might be called jazz idiom in it, and much present-day 'serious" music includes as a matter of course far more. The *Grand Canyon* is straight symphonic program music, thoroughly respectable (in spite of a first class cloudburst near the end) whereas the *Rhapsody,* as a first attempt to adapt the jazz idiom to a larger canvas, was certainly not respectable in 1924.

Now in 1941 the ethical status of symphonic jazz is a dead issue, a pointless one; both of these works have things to say of musical interest to anyone. Gershwin teemed with powerful and original musical ideas but his musical sense was myopic; he had no feeling for the natural harmonic relationships that give cohesion and balance to a long work the working out of which justifies its length. The *Rhapsody* is no more than a loose chain of striking ideas, with little more than mere consecutiveness in the way of organization. Grofé's music is largely derivative, and much of his material is thinly inspired platitude, but, in contrast to Gershwin, he has an excellent feeling for form—more sensitive than a number of our better-known composers—and above all he is a master of orchestration, and no mean humorist. . . . Thus the two classic types of the second rate composer, the half trained, undisciplined genius, and the highly skilled, competent but unoriginal craftsman.

★ ★

Brahms's Double Concerto for Violin and 'Cello, even though for full orchestra, seems by its thematic material to have been closer in the composer's mind to his chamber music than to his other orchestra works. Those who know the chamber music well will find strange echoes in this heroic piece of the intimate solo melodies of the quartets, so different from the orchestral themes of the symphonies. It is clear from the initial unaccompanied solo passages in the first movement that Brahms was particularly interested in the solo instruments. Perhaps this is the reason the work has had a place a bit apart from his other major works. Heifetz and Feuermann have recorded it with the Philadelphia under Ormandy, who produces one of the most spirited performances of his career. (V M-815; $4.50).

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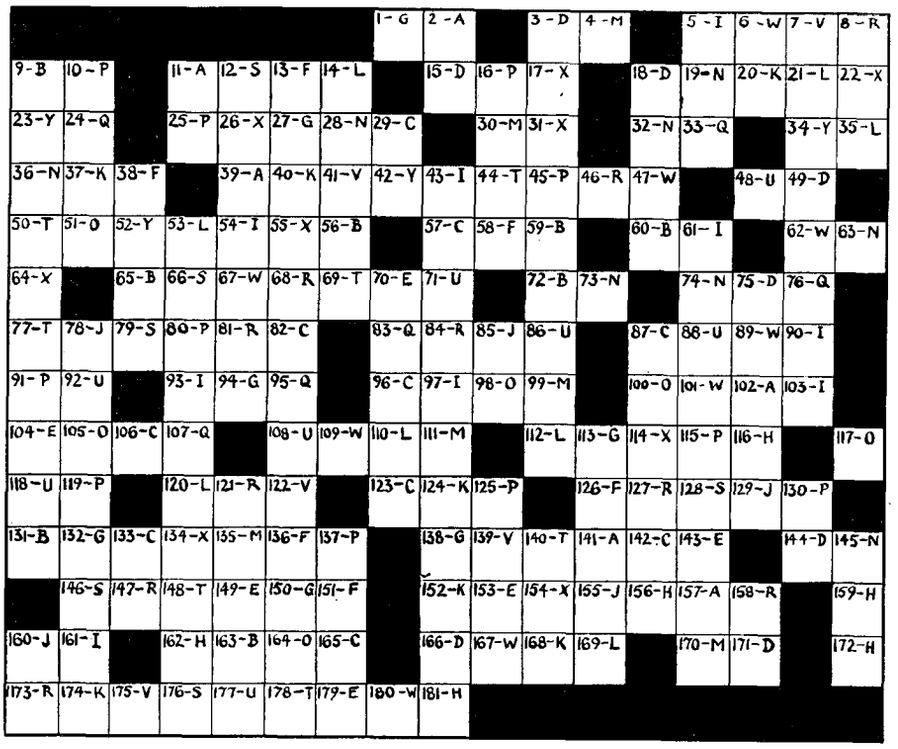
Double-Crostics: No. 395

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1938 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 35 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Leader of English Anti-Corn Law League (1846).

B. Approve of (a tenet; 2 wds.)

C. Exhibit the qualities of a certain role (colloq.; 3 wds.)

D. Having or forming an umbo.

E. Tending to convince.

F. Drama by Goethe (1788); Overture by Beethoven.

G. Lived without ordinary comforts (with *it*).

H. Pulled with great effort.

I. Opera by Wagner.

J. The music form of Peri's *Daphne*.

K. Title of Whittier poem in criticism of Daniel Webster.

L. Indifferent; not zealous.

M. Position; location.

N. Move to a distance (vb.; 2 wds.)

O. Goddess of yearly crops (Roman).

P. Novel by Victor Hugo, 1879 (English title).

Q. Playmate of wood nymphs and beloved of Apollo.

R. English poet (1752-70).

S. Shirker; blackguard (slang).

T. Frequents harassingly.

U. Dietetics.

V. Turn inside out.

W. Emperor of Japan (1912-26), father of Prince Konoye.

X. Cheap sleeping-place (slang; 2 wds.)

Y. Fellows (slang).

WORDS

157 2 11 39 141 102

56 72 9 59 65 60 131 163

57 142 96 165 82 29 106 87 133 123

75 3 18 144 49 15 166 171

104 179 149 153 70 143

151 136 126 13 58 38

113 94 150 1 132 27 138

162 172 159 116 156 181

43 97 103 54 61 93 90 5 161

160 78 155 129 85

40 20 124 37 152 168 174

53 169 14 110 112 21 35 120

135 170 30 111 99 4

32 63 19 36 28 74 145 73

98 117 100 105 51 164

16 45 115 80 91 125 25 137 119 10 130

95 76 107 33 83 24

81 158 121 8 68 127 84 46 147 173

176 12 146 128 79 66

69 148 140 50 44 178 77

177 48 108 92 88 118 71 86

139 41 175 122 7

47 180 89 109 67 167 6 62 101

17 134 31 154 26 114 22 55 64

42 34 52 23

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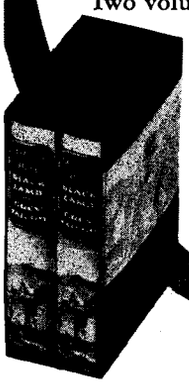

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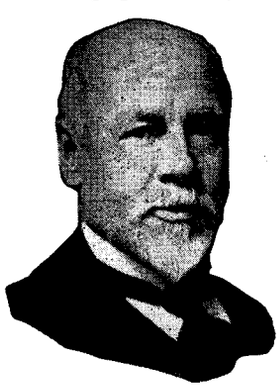

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